

# CHRISTIAN **COURIER**

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The root cause of anti-Americanism...p.10

"A thousand subtractions"  
.....p. 12,13

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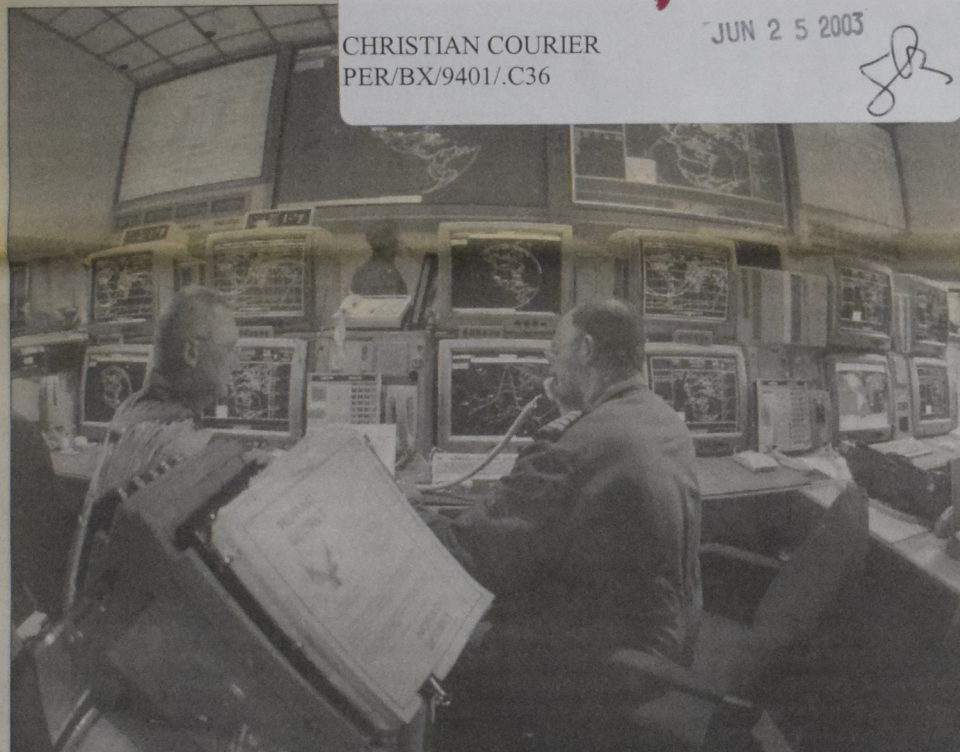


## Chretien cautioned about cooperation with US ballistic missile defense program

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Officers at work in the CMOC Command Center.

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St. Catharines (CC) – Toward the end of May, Canada's Defence Minister John McCallum announced that the government has agreed to join the Bush administration in planning the controversial ballistic missile defence program that is being developed for North America. The Chretien government insists that this does not mean it has made a commitment that Canada will cooperate with US proposals that include the weaponization of space but that it has joined in the negotiations in order to have input in planning the defense of North America.

Critics have expressed concern, however, because after alienating the US by its opposition to the "rush to war" with Saddam Hussein, the Chretien government now seems too eager to appease the US.

At present, plans do not involve any space-based weaponry but only land-based interceptor missiles. Some government officials are afraid that if Canada drags its heels too long, it will not only lose its chance to provide input but that it will also lose valuable contracts

and jobs created by the multi-million dollar program.

McCallum argued that the logical way to manage the joint defense of the continent is through NORAD, which has served Canada and the US well since early in the Cold War. Although NORAD headquarters are located at Cheyenne Mountain in Colorado, Canadian officers are stationed there to share control of operations. Both McCallum and Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham have cautioned that refusal to participate would result in a loss in Canadian sovereignty as the US would in effect take sole command of North America's defense.

The US has not ruled out proceeding with space-based weaponry in the future, but McCallum assured parliament that Canada has made its opposition very clear. And the Bush administration has given assurances that for the time being the missile program will not involve the weaponization of space. One of the reasons Canada wants to be "in the tent" at this stage, said

...see *Missile Defence* page 2

## Young people prominent in March for Life in Ottawa

**Sonya VanderVeen Feddema**

On May 14 Marlene Tersigni, executive assistant at St. Catharines Right to Life, and two teenagers, Olenka Choly, 15, and Matthew Czerwinski, 15, all residents of St. Catharines, Ontario, attended the March for Life in Ottawa, organized by Campaign Life Coalition, the political wing of the pro-life movement. Organizers estimate that 3,500 people participated, 60 percent of whom were young people. Pro-life advocates

came from across Canada – from as far away as British Columbia and Newfoundland. One group from Alberta traveled 50 hours by bus to attend.

The purpose of the National March for Life, according to the Campaign Life Coalition brochure, is to be "a statement, a witness, a prayer, and a demand – all directed to a government which has the ability to enact a law to prevent the destruction of life from conception to natural death." Tersigni

adds, "At the March for Life thousands of people gather to bear witness to the fact that in Canada one in four unborn children are killed in the womb. We care about the unborn children and their mothers. We want to see this holocaust stopped."

The first Canadian March for Life, says Tersigni, was held on May 14, 1998 when thousands of Canadians marched on Parliament Hill in Ottawa to mark the date, May 14, 1969, when abortion was

legalized in Canada by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's government. Since then, at least 2.5 million unborn children have been killed by abortion in Canada. In 1988 that law was struck down. Now Canada has no law concerning abortion.

### Quiet respect

Before the 2003 March for Life commenced, musician David MacDonald played praise and worship songs for the crowd and in-

troduced a new song called "Life is the Only Choice." Numerous pro-life politicians, dignitaries, and members of the clergy spoke, encouraging the crowd in their work.

When reflecting on the 2003 March for Life, Tersigni says, "The best part was when we lined up about ten people across and began filing down the street in an orderly fashion, holding signs that proclaimed 'March for Life,' 'Defend Life,' and 'You Can Save

...continued on page 3



## News

# Missile defense

...continued from page 1

McCallum, is to influence US decisions.

The Canadian Council of Churches and Project Ploughshares have been following developments very closely and have written the following letters to Prime Minister Chretien.

## Dear Prime Minister and Members of the Cabinet:

I am writing to express concern regarding the Canadian Government's intention to explore possible cooperation with the United States' plan to deploy a North American ballistic missile defence (BMD) system.

Canadian churches have long engaged the Canadian government on weapons deployment systems since these decisions are profoundly moral in nature, and are evidence of the long-term values we hold. As churches, we offer the following values to consider in your decision-making:

## War Prevention and Peace-building

— Cultivate the development of peaceful means of resolving disputes and continue to promote human security, as the well-being of peoples, for all. We are mandated by God to make peace and shun war.

## Disarmament

— Insist on strict limits on the use of force. We reiterate here, as we often have in the past, that nuclear weapons are an abomination and contrary to the will of God.

## Stewardship

— Honour creation — including space — as an abundant source of life and bounty and the common

heritage of all humanity forever, free from weapons.

## Accountable Public Institutions

— The Canadian government, with its responsibility for protection of these values, must retain its own capacity to independently assess, verify and act on perceived threats.

In the light of these values, we write to seek your assurances that the Canadian government will set out the conditions and security requirements that will have to be met before Canada can give material or political support to ballistic missile defence. In particular, we would appreciate your response to the questions posed by the attached brief from Project Ploughshares (see window).

We know that the safety and well-being of the people of Canada and indeed, the world can not be found within a technological fortress. The Canadian Council of Churches believe, as Canada's own policy declares, that the only real protection from nuclear weapons is their abolition and permanent prohibition; and we fear, with many others, that the pursuit of BMD will undermine — as it already has — existing arms control agreements, and will set back disarmament efforts as other states retain or expand their arsenals in an effort to overcome the perceived advantages of BMD.

We look forward to continuing this dialogue with you, and await your response.

Be assured of our prayers for you in these momentous times, may God's own wisdom light your path.

Prof. Richard Schneider,  
President

Canadian Council of Churches

## Canada and US Deployment of a Ballistic Missile Defence System: Questions for the Federal Cabinet

May 28, 2003

Foreign Minister Bill Graham has recently stated that "the best way to ensure that Canadian interests are being served is to remain engaged in dialogue with the United States on all issues of our shared continental security" (House of Commons, May 15). The real value of such a dialogue must be measured by the extent to which Canadian security concerns are heard and respected by our dialogue partner.

Canada's dialogue with Washington should clearly set out the conditions and security requirements that will have to be met before Canada can give any material or political support to ballistic missile defence. The appeal of BMD is obvious. What responsible government would not want to shield its people from attack by nuclear-armed missiles if such protection was available? The responsibility to protect is a paramount function of government, but it unfortunately does not follow that every plan undertaken in the name of protection will actually make people safer and more secure.

The following questions and issues, therefore, should be central to Canada-US discussions on BMD.

1. Will Canada seek an unqualified commitment from the US that ballistic missile defences will not involve basing or testing any weapons in space and will not break the global norm, or violate Canadian policy, against the placement of weapons in space?

The weaponization of space is not simply a vague future possibility; it is a currently declared and explicit US intention to place weapons in space. In April 2003 the Missile Defence Agency (MDA) reported that its pursuit of boost-phase interceptors would initially focus on land- and sea-based interceptors, but that "eventually" interceptors would be deployed on "satellites in low earth orbit." The report said the MDA would begin developing a space-based kinetic energy interceptor in FY04. Furthermore, its 2004/5 budget projects the deployment of a weapons test bed in space by 2008 "with initial, on-orbit testing to commence with three to five satellites" in 2008/9.

2. Will Canada be prepared to introduce into the BMD discussions a clear request that the United States government agree to talks in Geneva at the Conference on Disarmament leading to a space weapons ban, before proceeding further with BMD deployment?

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is the primary UN disarmament negotiating body, but talks on a space weapons ban have been stalled in recent years due to an ongoing agenda dispute that the United States could end by simply agreeing to good faith negotiations on "preventing an arms race in outer space." While the CD is not the only, nor the most effective, venue for such negotiations, any agreement by Canada to support BMD without a corresponding American commitment to negotiating a space weapons ban would represent an abandonment of Canada's historic commitment to space as a weapons-free zone.

3. Will Canada take advantage of the Canada-

US BMD discussions to seek clarification and disavowal of those elements of the US national security strategy and nuclear doctrine that assert a right to retain the option to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states?

The United States continues to explore new generations of nuclear weapons, notably low-yield battlefield weapons designed for use against targets in non-nuclear states (e.g., the so-called bunker buster bombs). The result is to make their own acquisition of a nuclear deterrent all the more attractive to countries in a state of enduring conflict with the United States. Canada could remind the United States that a simple way to dispel much of this proliferation pressure would be for it to disavow the pursuit of new weapons by ratifying the test ban treaty and by an unambiguous reiteration of the "negative security assurances" mandated by the Security Council in 1995 by which nuclear weapon states declare they will not use nor threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states.

4. Will Canada call on the United States to elaborate the ways in which it intends to work with the international community to prevent the proliferation of ballistic missiles, especially since the BMD system planned by the US only has a chance of being successful if the missile threat is kept to a minimum?

One of the ironies of the ballistic missile defence is that it only has a real chance of being effective if disarmament diplomacy successfully keeps the threat to minimum. Even the United States acknowledges that BMD's capacity will be limited to intercepting a very small number of attacking missiles — and even then, no system can guarantee 100 percent success. It follows, therefore, that arms control and disarmament are key to controlling the ballistic missile threat, and thus are key to the success of BMD itself. If the ballistic missile threat is not severely limited, any BMD system will be easily overwhelmed. The United States and Canada therefore have a shared interest in effective non-proliferation diplomacy — and if it is successful enough to make BMD feasible, Canada might suggest to the US that rather than spend hundreds of billions of dollars on a minimal threat, those resources might be better spent on additional disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

5. Finally, will Canada be open to discussing alternative defence cooperation arrangements where NORAD resumes its primary bilateral function, namely cooperation and coordination of air defence?

The primary cooperative bilateral defence activity that NORAD facilitates is air defence. NORAD also tracks missile launches, but that is part of a national US role linked to its nuclear deterrent. Air defence, however, is a bilateral operation. In the post-Cold War era that cooperative operation is only minimally concerned with traditional territorial defence matters — instead the focus is on things like drug interdiction and other illegal entries into North America, which is much more central to current security concerns and hence to the work that NORAD actually does.





## Politics

# March for Life

...continued from page 1

Your Baby.' To be with so many pro-life supporters was an awesome experience!" She notes that, though one might expect onlookers to be angry, they instead displayed a quiet respect. "Like other marches I attended, such as a prayerful walk past the Morgentaler Clinic in Toronto years ago, we didn't face any opposition. People nodded respectfully; some smiled. No one was rude."

When marchers solemnly and quietly passed an abortion clinic, many prayed, knowing what was going on inside.

Once back on Parliament Hill about twenty minutes later, David MacDonald called all the young people onto the steps of the Parliament buildings. Czerwinski says, "We continued to sing and dance and clap. At that moment I thought to myself that we made quite a statement. I believe that all the MP's who saw us heard our message."

## Taking a public stand

That evening at a banquet in the Ottawa Congress Centre Dr. John Willke, President of the International Right to Life Federation and author of *Handbook on Abortion*, updated the audience on the abortion situation in different parts of the world. According to Tersigni, he also informed the audience about the history of the U.S. March for Life, which took about seven years to gain momentum. This year on January 22, the anniversary of the day that abortion was legalized in the U.S., over 200,000 pro-life advocates marched in Washington, D.C. Dr. Willke encouraged his Canadian audience to continue their efforts to seek protection for society's vulnerable members and praised the work of pro-life leaders and politicians.

The next day Campaign Life Youth Coalition hosted a special youth conference for young people from the Niagara region. Liberal MP Tom Wappel spoke about his experiences as a pro-life politician. Tersigni observes, "Pro-life politicians are brave people, speaking up on issues that others don't want to hear about, and they deserve our prayers and support."

The secular media, which Tersigni claims is largely pro-abortion and ignores pro-life events, once again didn't report on the



Photo taken at the March for Life demonstration in Ottawa.

March for Life. However, she adds, several MP's in the House of Commons recognized it. Liberal MP Paul Steckle said, "I applaud the people outside who are taking the time to remind Parliament that it is our duty to protect those who are not able to protect themselves." Earlier on Parliament Hill and later at the banquet, numerous MP's spoke about how important it was to them to see pro-life advocates taking a public stand.

## Suited to young people

The March for Life is particularly suited to young people, Tersigni says, because it provides an opportunity for them to express their zeal and enthusiasm for what is right. Also, it allows them to become educated about the abortion issue, which gives them confidence to speak up for the unborn.

Choly's actively pro-life parents sparked her interest in the movement at a young age. By the time she was twelve she had attended the March for Life several times. Remembering her first March for Life experience, Choly says, "I realized that we weren't the only ones who thought abortion was wrong. I felt less embarrassed about saying that I was pro-life because I saw that it was not something weird, but something to be proud of." In following years when her parents were unable to attend the event, Choly travelled to Ottawa on the youth bus organized by the St. Catharines Right to Life. At the conferences and banquets she attended she learned most of what she now knows about the unborn, euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research, how the media portrays and influences the pro-life movement, and other

related issues. Because last year she heard an MP talk about his pro-life commitment, Choly was persuaded to become politically active in her own party in order to influence decisions related to pro-life issues.

Not only does the March for Life provide opportunities for young people to grow in knowledge and confidence, it also gives them a broader view of the Christian church in action. Czerwinski, who learned about the event by reading a poster at his church, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and attended for the first time, says, "What really impressed me was that no matter what branch of the Christian faith you belong to, whether it's Catholic, Anglican, or Greek Orthodox, or whatever else, we all believe and stand strongly for the same issue. We are pro-lifers!"

Perhaps what the March for Life provides most of all is encouragement in the ongoing pro-life battle. Tersigni says, "Attending the March for Life was a gift. Working for Right to Life can be discouraging because, despite all our efforts, over 100,000 babies are still aborted every year in Canada, and 37% of those abortions are performed on women who have already had at least one or more abortions. We see the devastation abortion has, not just on the children, but also on women and men. We want to spare people this heartache."

## ZINGEND GELOVEN



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## Methodists to mark 300 years since their founder was born

By Cedric Pulford

London (ENI) — For some 70 million Methodists around the world, June 17 is a special date: it marks the 300th anniversary of the birth of their founder, John Wesley.

In Britain, where Wesley was born, the celebrations will include an ecumenical service at Lincoln Cathedral in central England on that day.

As an itinerant preacher, Wesley is estimated to have travelled 200 000 miles (322 000 kilometres) in his lifetime, much of it on horseback. He often preached several times a day.

## "not simple pietism"

"John Wesley gave ordinary people a sense of counting. His faith was not simple pietism but the means of producing social outcomes," Leslie Griffiths, minister in charge of Wesley's Chapel in London, told ENI. Wesley's Chapel, which draws up to 20,000 visitors a year, was Wesley's London base and is where he is buried.

Wesley and his younger brother Charles, one of the world's most celebrated hymn writers, were Anglican priests. With colleagues like George Whitefield and Thomas Coke, they produced the "Methodist Revival" in England and spread the evangelistic faith to the American colonies, subsequently the United States.

In the areas Wesley visited, he left people to organize congregations, known as societies, so that

at his death in 1791, aged 87, Methodism was a flourishing community of 72,000 people.

Although Wesley is said to have declared, "I live and die a member of the Church of England", an independent Methodist movement eventually grew up as a result of Wesley's preaching. He emphasized the pursuit of holiness and the role of the church in social care.

## Influential among the working class

In the 19th century, the movement became immensely influential among the working class. Its belief in abstinence from alcohol helped many to lead dignified lives in degraded conditions.

Some commentators said social reform in Britain owed "more to Methodism than to [Karl] Marx."

## Spectacular growth

Methodism in Britain now has more than 300,000 members, making it one of the biggest denominations after the (Anglican) Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church.

In the United States, Methodism quickly took root, and the World Methodist Council has its headquarters at Lake Junaluska, in the state of North Carolina.

Over the last 40 years, Methodism has seen spectacular growth in Latin America (780 per cent), Asia (690 per cent) and Africa (450 per cent), according to Britain's Methodist Church.

## TORONTO

Via

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Aug. 16,18,19,23,25,26,30	979	939	779
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## Editorials

# Holiness: separating and joining

## Harry der Nederlanden

Some critics of the Reformation motif "justification by faith alone" charged that the emphasis on sola fide would lead to a loss of emphasis on holy living and good works. The opposite was true, however, at the time of the Reformation. The Reformers shifted emphasis from the "religious life" as the domain of priests, monks and nuns to the calling of all believers to be holy in the totality of their daily lives. Not the hierarchy, the clergy, but the congregation as a whole was to be seen as the church. The locus of sanctification shifted from what was done for and to the believer through the sacraments to the way believers embodied their faith in their day to day behavior.

The churches that emerged after the Reformation displayed a much greater zeal for holy living than had the Church of Rome and they exercised a much more rigorous mutual discipline. This is why the Calvinists in Britain came to be called Puritans. It was a term of disgust applied by those who objected to this rigorous supervision of doctrine and life. Different factions and leaders in the new churches sometimes seemed to compete with one another in how strictly they enforced what passed for purity in doctrine and life.

## Tension between including and excluding

As soon as the Christian church began to break up, the various churches were faced with the question of where to draw the boundaries. What biblical teachings are creedal and define orthodoxy? What kinds of sins demand formal discipline or excommunication? National churches, because they sought to include every believer

in the country, tended to draw the boundary wider. The "free" churches drew the boundary narrower, some so narrow, they devolved into sects.

When we look back over the history of Protestantism, we see churches divide about what the clergy may wear on the pulpit, the use of the organ, modes of baptism, and, among the Amish, the color of their buggies. In the CRC people have been disciplined for belonging to the Knights of Columbus, not sending their children to a Christian school, and working on the Sabbath. After vehement debates, discipline has been brought to bear on those who differed in their beliefs on baptism and regeneration, the literalness of the story of the Fall, the covenant, reprobation, common grace and more.

In the present dispensation there will always be a tension – sometimes healthy, sometimes not – between the church's calling to embrace all sinners and include all who confess Christ as Savior and it's calling to be a holy community that models Christ. If the church sets the requirements for membership too narrow, it devolves into a closed community of like-minded people, and it no longer extends the welcome and the love of Christ to all who believe. If it upholds hardly any standards of belief or behavior, the church no longer models Christ's righteousness and becomes indistinguishable from the rest of the world.

## Holiness as separation

In *Purity and Danger*, Mary Douglas suggests that in Judaism the preparation of food according to what is and what isn't kosher is related to Hebrew cosmology. It is a ritual reenactment of the separations – between land, water and air and the creatures proper to each – that God performed in the act of creation. Holiness and purity as well as the distinction between sacred and profane derive their meaning from the need to affirm and maintain the divine order.

One of the primary meanings of "holy" in the Bible is indeed related to the idea of separation. Israel was chosen and set apart as God's covenant people. It is called holy not because it had reached a higher stage of moral development or culture than surrounding peoples. Quite the contrary: the prophets sent by God scold Israel for its moral turpitude and its ignorance of the Lord God. The choosing itself is what confers holiness.

Many theologians today argue that this election of Israel is not like that of a lover choosing the beloved for her own sake but more like choosing someone to do a certain job. The elect may not see election as a privilege but as a mobilization for mission. (Maybe so. But I'd hate to lose the lover motif scattered all through Scripture.)

Throughout the Old Testament, however, the element of being set apart, remaining pure, and of a boundary between Israel and the surrounding nations is very prominent. And the holiness of God himself is also represented as a boundary. When Moses approaches the burning bush, he is warned about the danger of what is holy (the first time the word appears in the Bible). When the Israelites invade Canaan, God's insistence on their separateness and purity is so strong that he orders them to annihilate the heathen peoples living there.

## God's Holy Spirit in us

Although this meaning of holiness does not disappear in the New Testament, it does (it seems to me) undergo a sea-change, or at least a modulation. At Christ's cruci-

fixion, the curtain that separates the people from the holy of holies is torn from top to bottom. The curtain that separates God's holiness from his people is gone. Instead, Christ's holiness intervenes. Then, when he ascends into heaven as the head of the church, his body, he pours out the Holy Spirit on us and call us all saints, a holy nation.

God's holiness no longer stands over against us as a danger, as a consuming fire. It now lives in us, in the community of the saints. It is our source of life, of renewal, of liberty, of joy. At Pentecost it is the Holy Spirit who enables everyone there to hear the good news in his or her own tongue. It is the Holy Spirit who sends Paul on his missionary journeys to the gentiles, erasing the boundary between Jews and gentiles. It is the Holy Spirit who sends Peter the vision teaching him that the distinction between clean and unclean things is no more.

Holiness seems to acquire a very different connotation in the process, doesn't it?

But this does not mean that the tension is gone. Herman Ridderbos speaks of the indicative and the imperative, what we are and what we are commanded to be. We are new creatures. We are a holy people. And on this basis we are told to live as what we are – in the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Jesus and the sinful woman

Recently a young visiting pastor preached an excellent sermon on Luke's story about the prostitute who barges into a dinner party Simon, a Pharisee, gives for Jesus (Luke 7:36-50). While Simon accords Jesus none of the courtesies due an honored guest, the "sinful woman" washes Jesus' feet with her tears and anoints him with expensive oil. The pastor described the woman as "repentant" on the assumption that Jesus tells her that her sins are forgiven. Luke, however, doesn't say whether she is repentant. In the story that he tells to Simon, Jesus compares two men who have their debts forgiven by a moneylender. He asks who would love the man more – the one forgiven little or the one forgiven more?

The prostitute is told to go in peace because her sins are forgiven. The Pharisee is left offended and stuttering in protest. He was so sure where the line had to be drawn. But Jesus blurred the boundaries so that suddenly Simon found himself, first, in the same company as the sinful woman, and then standing outside the circle of shalom.

As we reflect on where we draw the boundaries of the church, we do well to reflect on this story lest we find ourselves in the position of Simon. I have in mind here the two overtures urging the CRC to cut off First Toronto without further ado.

If First Toronto insists on installing practicing homosexual Christians in office, it may have to come to that. But, surely, we must not do it so clinically and legalistically! I would like to see some demonstration of pain, of reluctance, of genuine love. What should be foremost in our minds is what we have in common with our homosexual brothers and sisters – that we are joined as sinners in need of grace. Before we do anything else, perhaps we should simply join together to weep, weep at our brokenness, weep about the lack of love, weep at how little evidence we muster of the holiness that molds us to his image.

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## Letters

# The CCG letter on same-sex unions:

The Council of Winnipeg Transcona CRC raises some important questions that the Christian community needs to talk about. The Committee for Contact with the Government acknowledges a need for church dialogue concerning the pressures on marriage. For that reason we sent an open letter to Canadian CRCs in the first week of June. What follows is a version of that letter condensed for CC readers.

## A third way: civil unions

The Federal Government is under increasing pressure to redefine marriage to satisfy Charter of Rights equality demands. The Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG) of the Christian Reformed Church has urged the Parliamentary Justice Committee to uphold the definition of marriage (the union of one man and one woman) and to address the legal rights and needs of same-sex couples in a different way. This *third way* approach is referred to as *civil union*.

Civil union provides a public legal framework that is an alternative to redefinition (opposed by many churches and faith communities) and to the 'marriage only' status quo (opposed by courts and gay and lesbian advocates). In fact, the designation *civil union* was a favored option by some members of the Justice Committee. The CCG's approach is outlined in a formal brief

to the Justice Committee and is summarized in the paper *Marriage at a Crossroads*. These documents are available at [http://www.crcjustice.org/crjs\\_ccg.htm](http://www.crcjustice.org/crjs_ccg.htm) and from the CCG office.

## Public justice

The CCG has struggled to respond faithfully to the challenging social and political realities surrounding marriage. Some people have argued that a *civil union* system that includes legal provisions for same-sex relationships will condone immoral behavior. There are no easy answers to this important question. In our efforts to come to an understanding of this matter the CCG has made a distinction between the public matter of justice in relationship law and the matter of moral judgments about same-sex relationships.

In our diverse reality, persons whose morality is different from ours, or who differ from us on ultimate questions of truth and meaning cannot, because of those differences, be denied civil rights. Governments and law need to address things *as they are* in the diverse reality of today. Matters of morality are ultimate questions about what *should be* (in a perfect world) – the state is unable to make these ultimate moral judgments in its policies.

Marriage laws provide protection for partners and for children who experience

harm due to relationship breakdown or death. Our governments need to deal with the civil rights and justice issues of harm that occur in relationships other than marriage. The CCG has argued that this must be and can be done in a way that continues to honor the current definition of marriage.

The CCG recognizes that this distinction between morality and public justice is controversial.

## The limited task of government

Nevertheless there are some grounds for the distinction found in the record of past CRC deliberations. The CRC Synod of 1970 accepted an overture (#23, p. 540 *Acts of Synod*, 1970) from the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada and appointed a study committee on homosexuality. The overture included these references regarding the decriminalization of homosexuality in Canada:

a. It is not the task of government to legislate private morality (see Art. 36 of Belgic Confession).

b. The new provisions change the conditions under which the sinful act of homosexuality is deemed punishable by law. They do not express approval of the act of homosexuality itself.

The CCG echoes these statements in its choice to address the public justice issue without any overt discussion of the private morality of homosexuality. We live in a diverse country in which there is often a difference between our moral stance on an issue and the law of the land – this is not likely to change quickly in a broken world.

In the 1973 Synodical report regarding homosexuality, Church members are encouraged to speak "prophetically to a society and culture which glorifies sexuality and sexual gratification" (in Guideline 11). The CCG has not sought to fulfill this Synodical mandate because its focus is communication with government (public legal and justice issues) as distinct from the broader

culture. Moreover, in this particular case, overt expression of our positions on morality would mean that our efforts to protect the God-ordained institution of marriage would go unheard in this charged political atmosphere. So, while we did not speak prophetically about sexual morality, we did strive to act prophetically regarding the public justice issues of marriage and relationship law (in the spirit of the justice discussions of the report to Synod 2002 [pp. 334-338]).

Our collective concern for marriage is expressed in a context in which governments are required to address civil rights and equality issues concerning same sex relationships. So we must make arguments for the protection of the definition of marriage that also acknowledge and address the public justice issues of same-sex couples. If we do not do this, legal and political authorities will certainly conclude that the definition of marriage violates the civil and equality rights of same-sex couples and must, therefore, be overturned. This would damage marriage significantly. Please pray that our leaders will act wisely to support marriage in this difficult political and legal situation, especially in light of the dramatic decision of the Ontario Court of Appeal on June 10.

Complex issues such as this are often controversial within the church, but we can try to come to a clearer understanding by taking a careful look at the political context. For this reason the CCG has developed *Marriage at a Crossroads* to assist CRC members as they discuss among each other and interact with MPs on the legal and justice issues of marriage and same sex unions. Please take the time to read *Marriage at a Crossroads* as part of our collective efforts to have a cordial and meaningful dialogue on this very difficult and important issue.

*The Committee for Contact with the Government of the Christian Reformed Church*

## Lies and half truths

Dear Editor:

How ironic that CC editor Harry der Nederlanden attacks the media for cynicism, given the volume of lies and half-truths peddled by the Bush administration leading up to its war on Iraq, and its conduct during the war. A few examples:

– the insistence that 2003 Iraq possessed vast volumes of "weapons of mass destruction" and posed a dire threat to the United States, its neighbors and the entire world. The relatively quick and bloodless (American blood) invasion proves otherwise;

– the repeated suggestions of links between Saddam Hussein's regime and al-Qaida, smearing Iraq with the legacy of September 11, 2001 to justify war. A significant percentage of Americans now believe this linkage, in spite of the near-complete absence of evidence;

– the awarding of lucrative oil and reconstruction contracts to Halliburton, Vice-President Dick Cheney's former employer, and other Republican-connected firms;

– the dramatic storming of the hospital and "rescue" of Private Jessica Lynch from enemy hands. It turns out Iraqi soldiers had fled the hospital where she was a day earlier, and she was being given good care by Iraqi medical staff, who had tried to return her to the Americans but had their ambulance fired upon;

– the insistence that the war had nothing to do with Iraq's vast oil supply, when the Ministry of Oil in Baghdad was virtually the only government installation protected

by U.S. soldiers from looters. Hospitals, cultural sites and police stations that could have held important evidence of Saddam's crimes, were all ransacked.

Is Mr. der Nederlanden playing devil's advocate, or does he really see clothes on the emperor?

James Kwantes  
Red Deer, Alberta

Mr. Kwantes is quite right. We have plenty of reason to be cynical, but he understates his case. Things are much worse than he says. Let's cast our net wider and talk about crime, abuse, cheating, neglect of children, corporate and personal greed, lack of charity, etc., etc. – grounds enough to distrust not only politicians, lawyers and clergymen but everyone.

And to see this corruption everywhere is to see truly, for the Bible itself tells us our hearts are pits of evil and deceit.

We must not only see the emperor naked; we must see the emperor as dead bones, a skeleton. But on the basis of Christ's incarnation, resurrection and ascension, I am prodded to look further: to see the image of God upheld even in Washington and Ottawa, and to see the Spirit working to dress us up in the righteousness of Christ, not just in the church but in the world.

That is not, I hope, playing the devil's advocate. It's recognizing that although evil and falsehood are powerful, the kingdom of God is more powerful. So we have a duty to look for it and to take notice of it. Maybe even to celebrate it.

– The editor

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## Letters/Opinion

## Equity for marriage in public policy



## Principalities &amp; Powers

David T. Koyzis

In a recent submission to the Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, Gerald Vandezande wrote:

"Marriages, common-law couples and same-gender committed relationships, *though they differ in character*, should be recognized and supported equally. These different conjugal relationships should be legally entitled to the same rights and responsibilities, the same benefits and obligations, including the legal relationships between the partners and their children" (emphasis his).

While I appreciate Gerald's care in emphasizing the intrinsic differences among these relationships, and while I recognize the different legitimate strategies employed by activists and academics, I would suggest that his use of the language of *equality* and of *rights* may not be all that helpful and could actually lead to greater injustice if not carefully qualified. In recent years I have come to the conclusion that the language of *equity* should replace that of equality in many instances. Why?

## Public legal privileges

Equality tempts us to quantify that which is unquantifiable. To speak of equality of citizens under the law is appropriate, because it is simply a way of affirming that no one person, *in his or her capacity as citizen*, should expect public legal privileges denied to other citizens.

## Within a public legal order there is ample room for a variety of human communities and relationships, including marriages and friendships.

But when we move into the realm of human communities and relationships, we find ourselves in the midst of entities differing from each other *in kind*. To assert that a certain kind of relationship should be treated as the equal of another kind inevitably creates confusion, unless we can demonstrate in what respect the two are similar. While there are undoubtedly affinities between a marriage (including a common law marriage) and a same-gender committed relationship, the fact that the former is intrinsically procreative while the latter is not is of more than incidental significance. Any law unable to take this into account in its allocation of benefits risks reducing marriage to little more than one more option among several for individuals seeking sexual fulfilment.

Moreover, Christians should be especially cautious about framing all political debates in terms of rights, particularly and narrowly those of individuals. Given that different communities and relationships facilitate different social goods, to treat all equally, which is usually taken to mean *identically*, may entail doing injustice.

James W. Skillen argues, correctly I believe, that a homosexual relationship ought to be understood as a type of friendship. I would add to his observation that the presence or absence within this friendship of a sexual element should not in itself alter

its public legal status.

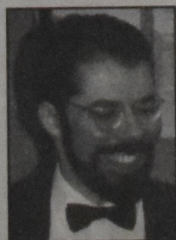
Within a public legal order there is ample room for a variety of human communities and relationships, including marriages and friendships. Both marriage and friendship produce undoubted public goods, *but they are not the same public goods*. Friendships can endure a multiplicity of altered circumstances, including geographical separation and the fading of common interests. Through distance some friendships become effectively dormant, to be renewed at the next meeting, while others end outright, due to any number of factors. However, and this is crucial, *the state does not intervene*. To be sure, it is in the interest of the larger society that people cultivate friendships, but for the most part the state allows them to do so without its own interference.

Marriage is necessarily different and ought to be treated differently, primarily, though not entirely, because of the procreative element mentioned above. Marriage is properly hedged about with numerous social and legal supports to ensure that husbands and wives live up to their mutual commitments. This is in recognition of the tremendous fallout from broken marriages. Children are far more likely to endure without lasting scars the loss of a friendship than the loss of a resident parent.

Thus the state should not assume that one sexual relationship is the equal of the other, because the long range consequences of each are not the same. If society is concerned for the well being of its children, who, as the old cliché puts it, are its future, then it cannot afford to pretend that marriage is just one more sexual choice among others. Marriage provides, among other goods, the stable context for the raising of a new generation.

## Category of domestic partnership

This said, there may indeed be merit in regularizing and formalizing other kinds of relationships for legal purposes, if the parties so desire, as I've written before in this space. The category of domestic partnership may be appropriate, although the term *household dependency* would be better, recognizing that households have always included members other than spouses and blood relatives. Again, the sexual side should not be brought into public consideration. However, to expect a relationship of household dependency to be treated as equal to marriage is to risk a miscarriage of justice — one with grave social consequences for the future. As the state will almost certainly be expected to address these consequences, it has an interest in ensuring the special protection of marriage as a unique and irreplaceable institution.



David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario. He is the author of *Political Visions and Illusions: A Survey and Christian Critique of Contemporary Ideologies*, just out from InterVarsity Press.

## Principled pluralism in a participatory society

By Gerald Vandezande

We live in a pluralistic society. Every person, institution and party works out of basic beliefs and core values that shape our world. These heart-felt commitments often differ. As a result, Canada includes a diversity of faith- and value-communities.

There are different kinds of pluralism. But what do we mean by pluralism?

The individualist kind contends that the individual can do as he or she pleases, without reference to any outside standard or guiding norm apart from existing laws. In short, individualism emphasizes individual liberty and autonomy at the expense of community and mutual responsibility. This libertarian pluralism leads to relativism. These ideologies do not recognize the importance of our human calling to love God and our neighbors (community) and to treat God's good creation with care and respect. They relativize truth that has been revealed, not to mention other people's different views and ways of life.

## Anti-pluralism

What could be a creative response to this laissez-faire pluralism?

Regrettably, too many Christians and their action groups react with a kind of "anti-pluralism." Those who fall into this ideological trap mistakenly contend that Canada has been or should be a "Christian" country. While they acknowledge that widely different views and ways of life exist in our democratic society, they insist that this diversity can best be accommodated within a certain type of national public order. They would permit limited diversity but would impose their understanding of morality on certain "religious" issues, such as human rights for gay and lesbian couples.

Too many anti-pluralists who defend this moralist position seldom speak out against material poverty or environmental degradation. They consider these social injustices and economic inequities as "secular" problems that lie beyond their overriding "moral" (sexuality-related) concerns.

People who defend this narrow position often pay mere lip-service to the unavoidable reality of religious and ideological diversity. Their anti-pluralist positions tend



to promote personal and social intolerance. Such discriminatory policies would deprive fellow Canadians and their respective institutions of the public recognition and respect they are constitutionally entitled to as citizens.

Ironically, in this respect, religious moralists have more in common with secular pluralists than they often realize. Too many secularists oppose the inclusion of faith-based education programs within the public school system, and the fair funding of bona fide alternative and independent schools outside the system. Both moralists and secularists attempt to use the power of government and the force of law to impose their beliefs and their own goals at the expense of the human rights of their ideological opponents.

In effect, both are guilty of majoritarianism. Both violate the principle of the common good of all based on public justice for all. Their policies discriminate because they disregard the diversity of creed, faith, ideology, lifestyle, religion or values.

## Showing respect for our neighbors

What then is the alternative? We ought to do more than oppose individualism and anti-pluralist reactions. Good public policies would reflect a co-operative pluralism within which we seek to show respect for all our neighbors and their particular creed, faith, ideology, lifestyle, religion or values. We must advocate a participatory pluralism that actively seeks to do public justice to the reality that people always function in a variety of relationships, structures and communities.

My shorthand definition of this



## Opinion/Sports

co-operative pluralism is: The public recognition that different people(s) and their institutions have different beliefs and goals, and have the fundamental freedom and legal right to live in different ways, without discrimination.

There are no such beings as autonomous, self-sufficient individuals who have no relationship to other people and the environment. We always function in relation to fellow human beings and God's good creation. That's the reality of life.

### Principled pluralism

We live and act in different social situations and societal structures that make up the Canadian Mosaic of diverse value- and faith-communities. All citizens, and their respective communities and institutions are equally entitled to the public protection and benefit of the Constitution, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,

human-rights legislation and other laws and policies. Such protection would enable all persons and communities to fulfill their particular purpose in life, within the framework of equitable legislation that respects all and discriminates against none.

Co-operative pluralism takes seriously Jesus' challenge to love all neighbors, even enemies — "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (Mt. 5:44) It acknowledges the public nature of basic belief. Such principled pluralism recognizes that all citizens must be given the public space and social room to be whom they think they are called to be. People of faith can then be people of faith, and ideologues can then be ideologues without discrimination.

At the heart of a multi-faith, multi-cultural society should be the principled agreement that every person and community must be

treated fairly and respectfully. At its core is the inclusive commitment to equal justice for all. Then, all citizens and their institutions can freely live out the significance of their respective beliefs and values. Certainly in a country dedicated to the common good, whose Constitution Act (1987) states that Parliament "...make Laws for the Peace, Order and good Government of Canada."

Gerald Vandezande, C.M.  
Scarborough, ON.

*Note: This article was written while preparing for, listening to and after presenting submissions on April 11, 2003 to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights regarding A Discussion Paper, dated November 2002, by the Department of Justice Canada on Marriage and Legal Recognition of Same-sex Unions.*

## Anglican same-sex blessing in Canada creates firestorm of controversy

### Ferdy Baglo

Vancouver (ENI)—A same-sex couple has received a church blessing in a special rite at St Margaret's Anglican church in Vancouver, touching off swift and furious reaction in the Anglican Communion around the world.

Bishop Michael Ingham of the Diocese of New Westminster had released the new order of service for such a blessing in late May to six congregations that had specifically requested it.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, expressed "sadness" over the May 28 blessing.

He said, "In taking this action and ignoring the considerable reservations of the church ... the diocese has gone significantly further than the teaching of the church or pastoral concern can justify, and I very much regret the inevitable tension and division that will result from this development."

### Church split?

The spectre of a split in the world communion was raised in a joint statement issued on Wednesday by primates and church leaders from the West Indies, Central Africa, Kenya, South India, Papua New Guinea and Southern Cone

(South America).

"Bishop Ingham's action has brought the Anglican Communion to a defining moment in which the clear choice has to be made between remaining a communion or disintegrating into a federation of churches," the church leaders said.

Archbishop Peter Akinola of Nigeria — the world's biggest Anglican province, with 17 million members, 81 bishops, and 10 archbishops — declared in a statement that his province had "severed communion" with the Diocese of New Westminster.

The issue of homosexuality and same-sex blessings has created controversy in the Canadian Anglican church for years.

The New Westminster synod had voted in 2002 to authorize a rite of blessing, sparking protests by delegates from eight of the diocese's wealthiest and most influential congregations, who have since withdrawn their participation and financial support from the diocese. The dissenting congregations have formed their own alliance and have been seeking support from like-minded Anglicans throughout the world.

In a statement on the blessing at St Margaret's, they said: "Never

before has a single diocese so abruptly and brazenly repudiated the church's [Anglican Communion's] 38 primates and their desire for Anglican unity."

However, the primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, Archbishop Michael Peers, did not pass judgement on the decisions of the synod and bishop of the New Westminster diocese.

Peers said in a statement on May 29 that he would not "anticipate the deliberations of the 2004 General Synod," where the issue was expected to be on the agenda.

The Canadian primate explained that the rite was intended "for the blessing of persons in committed, life-long, same-sex unions," and noted it was "an occasion for reflection and discernment among Anglicans in the diocese, in Canada, and throughout the Anglican Communion."

Gay and lesbian groups welcomed the same-sex blessing. "This is a very significant step along that path [of full membership of gays and lesbians] and I praise God that this has happened," Chris Ambidge, spokesperson for Integrity, a lobby group for gay and lesbian Anglicans, told the Anglican Journal.

## After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides



### THE BLUNT EDGE OF THE SWORD

"Yah, vell I just tell it like it is. If people don't like it, I don't care."

These were the words of an elderly lady in my childhood church after she had assassinated the character of a former pastor. He was apparently a "stupid man" who didn't do enough family visits and didn't seem to really "love da Lort." I remember her smug sneer and shrug of the shoulders.

In my heritage (and maybe yours), bluntness was seen as a virtue. If you told it like it is, then you weren't derided as a fence-sitter who failed to stand up for your beliefs. That "tell it like it is" quality has initiated many great debates over the years, and it's also hurt and chased away many people.

My childhood CRC building is now boarded up and for sale, partly a victim of 40 years of blunt and graceless attitudes.

### Golfer's graceless slam

A little while back, the big story in sports was Annika Sorenstam, a LPGA golfer who was allowed to play at the Colonial, a men's tournament in Fort Worth, Texas. Could she compete with the men? Would this open the door for more women to play in men's tournaments? After all, there are no gender-specific rules on the men's PGA tour: if you qualify, you're in.

There were many views on this, but a golfer named Vijay Singh had a very clear position. He publicly stated that he hoped Sorenstam didn't make it into the tournament because women didn't belong there. If he was paired with her, he said he would withdraw from the tournament.

Some say that Singh was just saying what so many men players were whispering in private and they applaud his candor. Despite Sorenstam's position as the best female golfer in the game and despite the grace that was shown to Singh himself after being busted for cheating in the 1985 Indonesian Open, he felt a desire to tell it like it is and bluntly share his hostility towards her involvement.

Of course, now he's ending up looking like a schmuck. Whenever there's bluntness, embarrassment never seems to be far behind.

### A case of the niceys

Now I'm all in favour of being frank and honest with people. It's blunt disregard for the complexity of issues and for people's dignity that I don't like. To be fair, I think I've suffered from the opposite affliction — a severe case of the niceys. Afraid to tell it like it is. More concerned with people's short-term feelings than their long-term welfare. Worried about how their reaction to my frank comments might make them attack my fragile self-esteem, I've coated critical comments with sugary platitudes or have just avoided making them at all.

I'm working on it. For others, it's more of a struggle between their human tendency to hurt people and their obligation to be loving.

It's interesting that in light of the complexity of recent political events, much of the public rhetoric becomes more and more blunt. Anti-war protestors are nothing other than "hippies." George Bush is seen by some as simply a "war-mongering oil baron." It's liberals vs. conservatives, "bleeding hearts" vs. fundamentalists and there's little room for positioning yourself elsewhere. Issues become simplified by creating two sides, labeling them, and piling on inflammatory adjectives to describe them.

Honesty and bluntness are two different things. The problem is that a lot of us don't know the difference. Maybe the only things separating the two are an open mind and a healthy dose of love.

Anyway, vell, I just tell it like it is...



Tim Antonides is a teacher and sports coach currently studying in Chicago, Illinois.



## Church

## Germany's churches seek and celebrate unity near Berlin wall

Berlin (ENI) — The biggest-ever official gathering in Germany uniting Protestants and Roman Catholics ended on Sunday, June 1, in Berlin, with an ecumenical service attended by tens of thousands of people. But the sharing of the Eucharist or Holy Communion did not carry the approval of Pope John Paul II.

"The Ecumenical Kirchentag [church congress] was a great step forward on the path of Christian ecumenism," Hans Joachim Meyer, one of the event's co-presidents, told worshippers. "No one can tear apart what now unites us."

Churches, told the gathering.

Senior politicians, including German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, joined church leaders, writers, musicians, artists and journalists, as well as religious leaders from outside Germany, at the congress, which included more than 3000 events.

At one event, the Dalai Lama, the leader of Tibetan Buddhism, addressed a crowd of 20,000 people.

At another, the Latin (Roman Catholic) Patriarch of Jerusalem, Michel Sabbah, and Israeli politician, Rabbi Michael Melchior,

just because in his latter years in this encyclical he has not become a Protestant," Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, told the church congress.

Catholic Cardinal Karl Lehmann acknowledged people had a "deep longing" for a common Eucharist, and said the Berlin event would give it a "new impetus". "It's now time to go full steam ahead," said Lehmann, chairman of the German Bishops' Conference.

### Coming together

Organizers said that altogether, about 200,000 people from Germany and beyond came to the German capital for the five-day event.

On Friday, 16 German denominations, including Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches, signed the Charta Oecumenica (ecumenical charter), a set of guidelines for promoting cooperation, towards the "visible unity" of the church.

This year Protestant and Roman Catholic churches in Germany are cooperating in sponsoring "The Year of the Bible," using multimedia exhibitions on biblical themes with the aim of getting people interested in the Bible.

"The Year of the Bible is meant to bring the Bible into the open and to inspire people to read this book," said Helmut Pante, the coordinator of the project for the Evangelical-Reformed Church of Bavaria and Northwestern Germany.

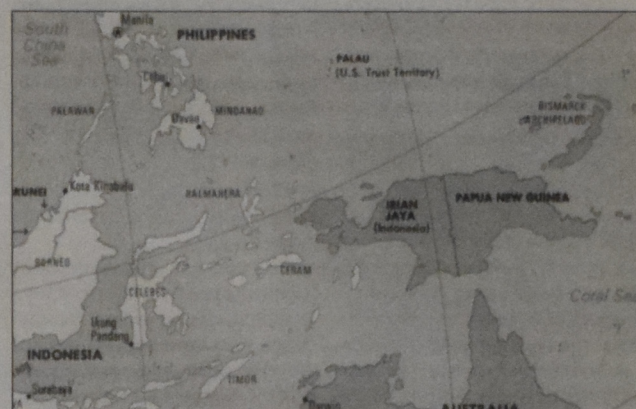
The German Bible Society is producing stickers, posters, CDs and T-shirts as well as special editions of the Bible, and organisers are hoping to reach 50 000 children with a specially designed Bible Discovery Tour.

Churches in Austria, France, Luxembourg and Switzerland are also marking 2003 as the "Year of the Bible," whose motto is "Seek. And Find."

A recent survey in Germany revealed that only four out of every 10 Germans consider themselves religious, reported Idea News Agency. The online survey found that of the 54 million Germans who are church members, fewer than 32 million would add "religious" to a self-description.

[Reports provided by Stephen Brown and Frauke Brauns.]

## Papua: churches burnt, 2 pastors killed in military crackdown



By Elizabeth Kendal

AUSTRALIA (ANS) — Papua (Irian Jaya) is a former Dutch colony of Melanesian peoples on the western half of the island of New Guinea. Over 90% of all indigenous Papuans are officially reckoned as Christians. Papua was annexed by Indonesia in 1963.

In December 2001 President Megawati Sukarnoputri signed a Special Autonomy law into effect. Church leaders were involved in writing the law, but Papuans in the Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM) or Free Papua Movement, continue their low-level resistance to Indonesian rule, whilst the Papua Presidium Council seeks independence by peaceful means.

**The TNI have intimidated and tortured many villagers around Wamena. Their possessions and livestock have been stolen and their schools, clinics and churches burnt down. Hundreds have fled into the jungle. Bodies of villagers who starved to death while hiding have also been found.**

Muslim transmigration from Java, the growing presence of the Laskar Jihad, and the February 2003 presidential decree to divide Papua into three provinces — all threaten the integrity of Papua and the future of the predominantly Christian Papuan people.

A complicating factor is a decree signed in 2000 which will take the Indonesian military (TNI) out of the nation's politics and domestic security by 2004. However, the TNI is used to being extremely powerful and their unhappiness with this prospect is behind much of the strife in Eastern Indonesia.

They claim they should control domestic security because of the 'serious problem of separatism'.

Many people fear that the Indonesian military and the Laskar Jihad are looking for opportunities to unleash terror on the Papuans. The TNI is seeking self-glorification and justification for its presence in domestic security, and the Laskar Jihad is keen to cement Papua as Muslim territory.

On April 4 2003, 15 unidentified men raided a military post in Wamena in the Central Highlands of Papua, causing three deaths. Of the 29 rifles stolen, 19 were soon recovered.

The TNI were questioned over the raid, as it was clear there was military collusion, and nine soldiers have been arrested. However, the TNI sent hundreds of combat soldiers (including 144 Kopassus - Special Forces) to Wamena, ostensibly to hunt down the culprits. In this resulting crackdown, the military destroyed many houses and at least 11 churches, mostly with flamethrowers.

The human rights group Elsham said there were over 50 instances when the TNI burnt Bibles to show their contempt.

At least 15 Papuans have been killed, some horrifically tortured to death. Amongst the dead are Baptist pastors Kutis Tabuli (41) and his brother Engellek Tabuli (57), who was the district church leader.

The TNI have intimidated and tortured many villagers around Wamena. Their possessions and livestock have been stolen and their schools, clinics and churches burnt down. Hundreds have fled into the jungle. Bodies of villagers who starved to death while hiding have also been found.

Elizabeth Kendall is a writer and researcher for the World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission



A memorial for those shot down while trying to scale the Berlin wall. The signs read unbekannt, meaning unknown.

Sunday's service took place in front of the Reichstag, the seat of Germany's parliament, just metres from where Berlin was once divided by a concrete wall guarded by watchtowers.

The Berlin Wall has long since vanished, but Catholics and Protestants remain divided over whether they can share together in the Eucharist, the sacrament that commemorates Jesus' last supper with his disciples and in which bread and wine are consecrated and consumed.

"Many Christians, especially lay people, are looking for a sign of hope from this Kirchentag," the Rev. Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of

outlined challenges facing Christians and Jews in the Middle East.

Organizers said when they launched the plans for the Kirchentag in 1996 that they hoped it would culminate in a shared Eucharist.

But the most recent encyclical of the Pope restated the traditional Catholic teaching that prevents Protestants and Catholics from sharing in the Eucharist and is seen as putting an end to hopes for such a ceremony.

The Vatican's senior official for ecumenism, Cardinal Walter Kasper, dismissed suggestions that the letter on doctrine marked a setback for ecumenism.

"You cannot criticise the Pope

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## Church

### Church workers targets in intensified Colombian war

Chris Herlinger

New York (ENI) — Churches have increasingly become targets of violence perpetrated by both left-wing and right-wing groups in Colombia, said eyewitnesses to the worsening situation in rural areas.

"The churches were once removed from the conflict. But no more," said Luz Marina Gomez, a human rights activist and member of a small independent Protestant church, at a forum this month at New York City's Interchurch Center.

Gomez and Luis Teodoro Gonzalez Bustacara, a Roman Catholic priest, said increased militarization was raising the level of bloodshed and crippling Colombian society. The activists spoke as the guests of US-based groups active in issues related to Colombia, and echoed concerns made by other Colombian church representatives who have visited the United States in the past year.

In some ways, the war in Colombia today differs from Latin American conflicts of the 1970s and 1980s. In those clashes, activist clergy and church workers influenced by liberation theology -- a teaching that included Marxist economic analysis and elements of social activism -- were often targets of right-wing groups and military units.

**Clergy who simply offer safe haven to those fleeing from the intensifying war can be interpreted as taking sides in the conflict, observers say.**

Today various clergy, including pastors of small independent Protestant or Pentecostal churches in rural areas who claim to be apolitical, have become targets of violence -- from both leftist guerrilla groups and right-wing paramilitary units.

Clergy who simply offer safe haven to those fleeing from the intensifying war can be interpreted as taking sides in the conflict, observers say.

The situation is especially tense in Arauca, an oil-rich region in the north bordering Venezuela that is the home province of Gonzalez and Gomez.

Leftist forces -- most prominently the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), which has been labelled terrorist by Washington -- have for years been attacking a 500-mile pipeline in Arauca used for US-bound oil. In recent months, FARC has stepped up its military campaign with periods of daily bombing.

At the same time, as part of a "counter-terrorism" effort, 70 US Army Special Forces have been training Colombian military personnel to protect the pipeline, which is used by Occidental Petroleum, a US firm.

The militarization has crippled the region, Gomez and Gonzalez said, paralyzing Arauca's economy and forcing people from their homes. "We have two options: either wait for death or leave," Gomez said.

The activists called for a renewal of peace negotiations to end the nearly 40-year conflict and a redirection of military funding to assist with education in the region.



### Pakistan acquits illiterate man of blasphemy

Barbara G. Baker

ISTANBUL (Compass) — After four and one-half years in prison for alleged blasphemy against Islam, Pakistani Christian Aslam Masih was acquitted June 4 in a 15-minute appeals hearing before the Lahore High Court. In his mid 50s and illiterate, Masih was arrested in November 1998 on charges that he had desecrated the Quran by hanging verses from the Muslim holy book in a charm around a dog's neck.

Although the prosecution only

produced hearsay evidence against Masih, he was found guilty in May 2002 and sentenced to double life-sentences. In overturning Masih's lower court conviction, the judge took what one observer called "a very aggressive attitude against the prosecution," noting that the prosecution's chief witness had retracted the statement attributed to him by the police.

Seven other Christians remain jailed in Pakistan on drawn-out charges of blasphemy.

### Baptists, Anglicans meet for ecumenical discussion

SANTIAGO, Chile (EP) — Baptists and Anglicans have held international conversations in Latin America and the Caribbean. According to the Baptist World Alliance (BWA), the purpose of the meetings was to enable Anglicans and Baptists to learn from each other and to deepen the understanding of the relationships between the two world communions in the light of their histories. The meetings with the Anglican Church started in 2000 and are scheduled to conclude in 2005.

**Geography is not going to be determinative any longer for authentic Anglicanism."**

"The unique feature of these Baptist/Anglican gatherings is that they have brought together many more participants from all continents than is usual in inter-church conversations in which Baptists have participated," said Wendy Ryan of BWA. The meetings "have been contextualized to focus on the different continents and their particular approaches to the practice of the Christian faith. It has meant that many Baptists from all over the world have been engaged."

Tony Cupit, BWA director, said, "There was a general agreement that those areas of faith and life that we share in common far outweigh the areas where there are

differences between us."

Meanwhile, in January, almost 600 Anglican Evangelicals from across Britain met in London to discuss how to evangelize their nation. Over 200 churches were represented.

Dr. Peter Jansen, the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Australia, was the main speaker at the packed conference. Local and international media have reported that the conference was actually the beginnings of a coup d'etat against the Church of England and Rev. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury and leader of the Anglican church, which has 70 million members worldwide. The appointment of Williams, who has a liberal reputation, as archbishop in 2002 has concerned many conservative churches. However, organizers of the January conference denied the reports.

During the meeting, Jansen did criticize Williams in front of the assembled ministers and press. According to the Sydney Morning Herald, Jansen said that "days are coming when more will have to be done to define Anglican communality than simply what the Archbishop of Canterbury may decide." Jansen said the Archbishop of Canterbury office was important but "we must not regard it as being the fixed point in determining who's in and out of the club. Geography is not going to be determinative any longer for authentic Anglicanism."

### Baptist mission board fires 13 missionaries, 30 more resign over required faith statement

FARMINGHAM, Mass. (EP) — Trustees of the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) International Mission Board (IMB) voted May 7 to terminate 13 missionaries who refused to sign the denomination's new faith statement. Twenty more missionaries resigned and 10 took retirement in refusal to affirm the new statement.

The 2000 "Baptist Faith and Message" statement is seen as a push by the SBC toward a more conservative denominational doctrine. At least 34 other missionaries resigned last year in protest of the statement. That means at least 77 IMB missionaries have left the mission field over the faith statement.

IMB president Jerry Rankin said, "We regret that any of our missionaries have chosen to resign rather than affirm the faith state-

ment, but we feel it is time to move forward and keep our focus on sharing Christ with a lost world."

According to the Associated Baptist Press, the main objection of most missionaries who refused to sign the statement is that "signing any faith statement amounts to affirming a creed -- something that is historically anathema to Baptists." Rankin contended that affirming the faith statement is necessary to assure Southern Baptist members that their missionaries are following the boundaries outlined by the SBC.

"It is not appropriate to expect Southern Baptists to support those who are not willing to work in accord with what the denomination confesses to believe," said Rankin. "To do so would undercut the credibility and confidence in the IMB as a denominational mission entity

serving Southern Baptists."

"The SBC family has been in strong agreement concerning our statement of faith," said Bob Claytor, chair of the IMB trustees. "Our board reflects the agreement, and 99 percent of our missionaries are also in strong agreement."

After the denomination accepted the revised faith statement, Rankin sent a letter to all its missionaries asking them to affirm the statement. He said their doing so would help them "move beyond a continuing and potentially damaging issue that could distract us from our mission task, unnecessarily create suspicion on the part of some and erode the support of you and the IMB."

The IMB currently has 5,500 missionaries working among 1,497 people groups around the world.



## Opinion

# The root cause of anti-Americanism

## Part 1

Harry Antonides

*The Canadian is "the first anti-American, the model anti-American, the archetypal anti-American..." (Frank Underhill, 1889 - 1971)*

At first sight, Canadians are the least likely candidates for anti-Americanism. We are neighbors, sharing an undefended 4000-mile border. We speak the same language and interact in innumerable ways through travel, family and business ties, by watching American television and films, reading American books and magazines. We are joined in a defensive military pact, the North American Aerospace Defence Command. Most importantly, our economies are more intertwined than any other two countries; some 87 per cent of our exports are to the U.S.; the value of two-way flow of goods across our border is 360 billion dollars per year.

Although the birth of our nations took quite different paths – a revolution and a murderous civil war south of the 49th parallel and a more gradual and peaceful evolution in Canada – we are inheritors of the same broad Anglo Saxon mother lode of Western, representative governance. This may explain to some extent the intensity of anti-Americanism in this country today. In this series of articles, I simply want to explore what might lie beneath the surface of contemporary anti-Americanism all over the world, beginning with the Canadian scene.

### Bad Blood

Anti-Americanism is not a new phenomenon, but it has swollen in intensity since the American-led war in Iraq. The main charge against America is that it declared war on Iraq without first obtaining United Nations' approval. Led by France and Germany, the war critics insisted that the route of weapons inspections and diplomacy would have been the better way.

Canada's refusal to join the U.S. in the war against Iraq has angered many Americans, who consider this an act of bad faith at a time when they were looking at least for moral support from its nearest neighbour. The critics of America in this country on the other hand are describing our refusal as an act of courage and an

admirable show of independence.

That the war was of short duration and resulted in far fewer casualties and much less destruction than the critics predicted has changed few minds. That many Iraqis welcomed the armies that within one month managed to enter Baghdad and rid the country of one of the worst tyrannies of our time has made no difference among the anti-American crowd. The reality is that the hatred for America has become more hard-edged. Instead of gratitude for liberating an enslaved nation, the U.S. is accused of being reckless with its massive military power and indifferent to the true well-being of the Iraqi people.

I am not talking of Al Qaeda and similar terrorists who have vowed to bring more death and destruction to America and all its allies. No, I am referring to this country, where leading commentators in print, on radio and television, and in university lecture halls hold forth about the evil of power-hungry Pax Americana. American students in Canada have felt intimidated and been driven to tears by the hostility they have encountered.

### A slap in the face

The Chretien government, the left wing of the Canadian opposition, many in the media and the academy are outspoken in their dislike and even contempt for the U.S. president and administration.

Prime Minister Jean Chretien has made a habit of flaunting his independence from American policies. A year after the 9/11 terrorist attack, he stated in an interview that this attack was an expression of anger at the way the U.S. was displaying its power in the world. He warned that the West, especially the U.S., is humiliating poor countries. He said that the poor of the world look upon the rich nations as "being arrogant and self satisfied, greedy and with no limits. The 11th of September is an occasion for me to realize it even more."

Mr. Chretien has been very lax in disciplining Liberal members of Parliament who publicly insulted the American people and government. His own assistant who publicly referred to President George Bush as a moron was first excused then shifted to another position in the federal bureaucracy.

The publicly owned Canadian Broadcasting Corporation claims to be simply a presenter of the news, but in fact its politically correct bias, including a strong anti-American component, is all too evident. One of the recurring themes in a discussion of our Canadian identity is that we are not just different from Americans, but better. We are better, because we are more caring than Americans. Now there!

There is a steady drumbeat of finding fault with the U.S. and particularly with President Bush and his administration. These are some of the recurring themes of anti-Americanism: the U.S. is a super power and it wants to remake the world according to its design; it has an arrogant cowboy mentality and wants to intimidate the entire world with its impressive military power; in other words, it wants to construct a world empire; it is indifferent to the loss of life caused by its fighting armies; it prefers unilateral action and has contempt for a multilateral approach; it prefers military action to diplomacy; hence its disrespect for the United Nations. And so on. In Canada, these and other faults of the Americans are retold again and again, often in a sneering manner, as if we are morally superior to those greedy and arrogant Americans. Don't you know the war against Iraq was all about oil!

A survey about Canada-U.S. relations, conducted in November

2002 by the polling firm Strategic Counsel, found that almost seven in ten Canadian respondents believe that the U.S. is "starting to act like a bully with the rest of the world." Michael Sullivan explained that Canadians, on the other hand, are more interested in peace keeping. He said that this is part of our personality: "We take pride in medicare, we take pride in our peacekeeping role. And when we look at the U.S., we don't see those kind of values reflected." (*Toronto Star*, December 28, 2002.) This is a refrain repeated ad nauseam. But it gets worse.

The prize for the most insulting smear against the Americans must go to Bill Blakie, a prominent NDP Member of Parliament, who publicly stated: "I find it strange that a pro-life politician like George Bush is planning every minute of his life to kill as many Iraqi children as he can in the name of oil or whatever it is that's really on the agenda."

Did this insult call for unanimous condemnation from his colleagues? No, his position as a leading and vocal member of our Parliament is unaffected. His Winnipeg colleague Pat Martin had this to say, "I think Bill showed courage to be that forthright. I mean, he's saying what a lot of us are thinking."

### The Great Deception

You want proof that Canadian shapers of public opinion do not stop at the most outrageous

conspiracy theories? Read what a prominent *Toronto Star* columnist Michele Landsberg wrote in her May 11 column about the work of Barrie Zwicker. Landsberg describes him as a journalist "with a long list of solid credentials" whose video *The Great Deception* purports to unmask the real story behind the American war on terrorism. Zwicker raises a lot of far-out questions intended to throw doubt on what really happened on September 11, 2001, such as:

Why did the U.S. Air Force fail to respond immediately after the 9/11 attacks?

Why did President George Bush remain for half an hour in a Florida classroom after his chief of staff told him about the second plane?

How did the FBI know the names of the terrorists within 24 hours?

What about the billions of dollars made by inside traders of United and American Airlines stock?

Landsberg comments these "are questions that 99 per cent of Canadian journalists have not dared or deigned to ask, and that most Canadians would prefer not to hear."

What is she suggesting by following the line of Zwicker's questions? That the highest level of the American government conspired to plan the horrible events of 9/11? That the official

...see *Anti-Americanism* page 11





## Christian Living/Opinion

# A day with the hospital chaplain

*Rev. John de Vries shared this account of the work of a hospital chaplain with the members of First London CRC.*

You wonder what this ministry looks like or consists of. To merely tell you about the number of patients visited, the emergency room interventions with accompanying ministry to families and others, the multidisciplinary rounds, the hospital committee meetings about spiritual and religious care, the contacts made with community priests, pastors and faith leaders, the advocacy done on patient's behalf, the prayer sessions and worship times conducted—that would be boring.

Is there a better way to accompany me in ministry than to join me in the following story of a day in hospital ministry?

## Words of hope

As on most other days at the Public General Hospital I attend the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) rounds at 8:30 AM. The nurse gives reports on the night's critical care admissions and updates on patients still in 'critical' health condition. With this information, I visit patients according to need and opportunity. Even though 76-year-old Jack is not fully conscious, I share words of hope and a brief Scripture. Whether in the ICU (eight beds) or in the Palliative Care Program, persons who are dying and may never regain full consciousness still hear

what visitors say.

Next I visit 59-year-old Susan. Susan came into the hospital Emergency Room at 9:12 PM. After receiving immediate attention in ER, Susan was moved to ICU for observation and further treatment. Susan tells me her complete left side has been paralyzed due to a stroke; she is anxious and upset. This is her second stay in the hospital. She had experienced a mild stroke three years ago. Susan agrees that I should contact her priest to let him know about her condition and pass along her request for prayer support.

After our brief conversation, Susan has become more hopeful. She is reminded of her previous hospital stay when another paralyzed stroke patient regained the full use of his limbs through physiotherapy. I share with her some verses from Psalm 22, a hymn of lament and hope, only to be interrupted by my pager. Susan welcomes a prayer and I remind her that her priest will be contacted.

## "I don't know if you can help..."

The call on the pager was from the Emergency Room. "I don't know if you can help, but there is a family in distress. You can visit them in the quiet room."

In the quiet room I meet a distraught lady about 50 years old. "My 76-year-old mother is really sick and was just brought here.



CLAC PHOTO

This is hard to believe. She was always so healthy. My husband is parking the car and should be here soon."

I listen as she talks about mom, her history of good health, the great and loving person she was, and the suddenness of this tragic event. She and her husband belong to a United Church in Thamesville. But the pastor has only been there a week or two and does not know them. They accept my offer to locate and inform their new pastor of mother's critical condition.

While I'm making several calls to try to find the new pastor, a nurse visits the quiet room to inform daughter and son-in-law that mother is now stable and will be admitted to ICU. I visit briefly with the daughter and son-in-law and they begin to share more grief about other health crisis events they experienced earlier with their

own children.

It is amazing how often people in the hospital, stricken by a crisis in the life of someone they love, will begin to share layers of unresolved pain and grief incurred by tragedies experienced earlier in their life when given a listening ear.

We join in prayer and I assure them that their church and pastor has been contacted.

## Dying of cancer

With no more messages to respond to on my voice mail, I go for lunch in the newly renovated hospital cafeteria. It has been transformed from a cold sterile white eating area to a warm-colored room with engaging murals and 'friendly' furniture. Lunch provides me a chance to get to know staff on an informal level. You quickly see the stress that the nursing staff experience day to day. Many nurses are mothers with active children while working shifts that make a nine-to-five employment a rarity. I am amazed at their commitment and resilience as they provide quality patient care.

As the Medical Unit is also my responsibility for pastoral care, I go there to revisit Rose who is dying of cancer. Rose had gone

home but returned when the pain became intolerable. Her husband says he is not happy and seems upset with staff. I listen to him and we talk further about his concerns.

Often it is not just the patient, but upset, anxious or grieving family members that benefit from counseling and pastoral care. Rose and her husband hadn't been married very long before the recent diagnosis of cancer. As she is dying before his eyes, his dreams of marital bliss are quashed. Our visit helps him to make a small beginning of grieving those immense losses. Rose's adult children from a previous marriage also complicate matters. When health crises take place family tensions and conflicts surface.

## No day the same

I make several other visits as well, but these are enough to give you a taste of hospital chaplaincy.

It is a ministry that involves living and dying patients, families, nurses, doctors, community clergy, hospital volunteers, and a multidisciplinary, professional staff. It is a ministry that calls for counsel, scriptural comfort and hope, listening and prayer. No day, no person, no situation is ever the same. God is always there as people receive quality care for life here or for life in eternity.

*Rev. John de Vries Jr. is a chaplain at the Chatham-Kent Health Alliance in Ontario. (Names and circumstances have been altered for reasons of confidentiality).*

## Anti-Americanism

...continued from page 10

version of those attacks is a big lie?

That conclusion, as unbelievable as it sounds, is inescapable, although Zwicker appears to be more careful than that. To make sure that we get the point of Zwicker's video, Landsberg tells us that she is familiar with this kind of conspiracy. In January she wrote a column about American declassified documents that reveal the existence of top-level conspiracies. According to her, the U.S. government has secretly plotted intricate schemes that include smuggling, drug-running, and assassination. "They even considered rigging fake terrorist attacks that would cost American lives in order to stir the public to war-ready outrage," she claims.

## Smells like fish

By juxtaposing the Zwicker video and her own January column, the conclusion is unavoidable. The highest level of the current American administration is guilty of an unspeakable crime. Landsberg writes that as she watched the video, "a frightening chill came over me." No wonder, for the conclusion she has come to is too awful to contemplate. But then she seems to back off with this final observation: "I agree with Zwicker when he says, 'I don't know exactly what happened, but something smells very fishy.' Even more rank-smelling is the refusal of most Canadian journalists to ask embarrassing uncool questions about one of the worst

calamities of our time" (*Toronto Star*, May 11, 2003).

This is what commentary in Canada's largest paper has come to. We are left with a fishy smell and a pronouncement that 99 per cent of her colleagues, unlike herself and Mr. Zwicker, are cowards and incompetents.

The mostly state-controlled Arab media, by incessantly pressing home the same message as the one told by Zwicker and Landsberg, have persuaded the Arab population that the 9/11 terrorists were actually Jews, in cahoots with the American government. Is it any wonder that they hate the U.S.? It is a shameful thing that such lies are spread among the Arab population. Many of them are helpless against such

vicious propaganda, for they are a captive audience and are barred from access to any other source of information.

What is even worse is that such monstrous lies are given credence in this country by people who are blinded by their visceral hatred of America. I find this totally incomprehensible. The authors of this nonsense should not forget that their writings are eagerly noted and distributed in the Muslim world. What about their professional associations, do they not have some responsibilities here?

That such blind and malicious hatred is helping to fuel anti-Americanism in this country is reason to pause and not simply to repeat the standard arguments for

thinking ourselves much better than our neighbours to the south. I think that this also has something to do with our Christian duty not to bear false witness but rather to advance the good name and reputation of our neighbors.

...More about this later

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## Alzheimers

# Alzheimer's disease — "A thousand subtractions"

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

According to author David Shenk, Alzheimer's disease is "death... by a thousand subtractions" (*The Forgetting - Alzheimer's: Portrait of an Epidemic*. New York: Doubleday, 2001, pp. 224). Susan and Betty\*, two women whose mothers suffer from the disease, know the gut-wrenching heartache of that cruel mathematics.

Betty's mother has had symptoms of Alzheimer's for at least seven years, the disease initially progressing slowly. Betty says, "It started with forgetfulness. However, Mom was always forgetful so we thought it was because she was getting older." When Betty's mother repeated herself five, six, seven, or more times and when she became fixated on certain events, the family realized her forgetfulness could not be attributed to aging. On a visit to a neurologist she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

Susan's mother showed similar symptoms, as well as others. Though keeping the house clean had always been important to her, Susan's mother lost interest in her own household chores and stopped helping Susan with laundry or dishes as she usually had. When her parents stayed with her children while she and her husband left for several days, she returned to find that her mother had done nothing each day. Susan says, "She had no sense of what needed to be done."

Though Alzheimer's "thousand subtractions" inevitably rob a person's mind, the process happens over a period of time. Susan describes the in-between stage when the person suffering from Alzheimer's is aware that something is wrong, but is unable to do anything about it.

She says, "The hardest time for Mom was when she was still sort of aware of what she should be doing, but not quite knowing what it was that she should be doing, just guessing. She was good at covering up at first when she was still able to. She was frustrated with herself and tried hard to do the right thing and say the right thing."

As a result of her frustration, Susan's mother often blamed her husband for things that went wrong.

### Being a mother to your mother

Both Susan and Betty discovered that, though losing a mother to Alzheimer's was emotionally shattering, their fathers' experiences of losing a spouse to the disease was devastating to the extreme. Betty says, "It was the hardest for my dad. He wouldn't even say the word Alzheimer's and didn't want us to either. Even up until recently I believe he always hoped she would get better. But that doesn't happen; it only gets worse."

Susan agrees: "My dad made excuses to avoid admitting the reality of the situation. That's where the denial came in."

As their mothers' minds were robbed of clarity, Betty's and Susan's relationships to



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE

their ailing parents changed drastically. "My siblings and I lost the communication we once had with our mother," Betty says. "We've lost the person that she was. We are the parents now and Mom is the child. We have feelings of protectiveness. We want to help her and make her comfortable in any way we can. But our love for her is the same, just expressed differently."

Susan's experience has been similar. "It's time to care for Mom as she cared for us when we were children," she says. "My siblings and I have become a mother to our mother."

Being a mother to your mother involves many challenges. While Susan's mother was still living at home, Susan wanted to ensure that she was bathed regularly. However, because her mother was terrified of water, bath time was "a battle in itself."

"She was like a child when I would try

to talk her into taking a bath," says Susan. "She would hold herself and beg me not to make her get into the tub. It became a real challenge and only got worse as time went on."

Susan encountered other difficulties as well during this period. Her mother had always been particular about how she looked, but with the onslaught of Alzheimer's, familiarity became more important to her than clean or attractive clothes. Instead, she wanted to wear the same clothes every day or would wear garments that didn't match at all. To ensure that her mother looked tidy, Susan reminded her dad to take all dirty clothes away so they could be laundered.

Many families of persons with Alzheimer's valiantly care for their ill members at home, but eventually they are faced with the reality of seeking support and nursing care. "Putting my mother in a

nursing home was the hardest thing I have ever had to do," says Susan.

Her pain was exacerbated by relatives who implied that she should have considered taking care of her mother in her own home. Staff at the Alzheimer's Society had warned Susan that she might encounter this reaction from family members. They kept in regular contact with her, ensuring that she was coping with the situation in a healthy manner and affirming that she and her siblings were making the right decision.

### Dad needs help

Betty's mother is not yet in a nursing home, but is being cared for by Betty's father. As their mother's symptoms became more serious, Betty's family convinced their dad to utilize the services of community organizations that help persons suffering from Alzheimer's. Betty says, "As primary caregiver, my dad does not need to do this alone. Now Mom is able to go to a day care and she gets home care."

Betty shares how proud she is of her father for standing by his wife: "He takes his marriage vows very seriously — 'till death do us part' — and has often said that, as long as he has breath, he will take care of her." But because Betty's father has numerous health problems himself, it's crucial that he receive respite help.

Betty has often wondered, "When the time comes, could I do it? Could I take care of Mom?" But she has answered that question for herself in the same way many others have: "I realize that her needs are far more than I could handle, and that soon she will need to be in a nursing home."

### Special moments of grace

Though many visits with their mothers are emotionally draining, both Susan and Betty still experience joyful moments with their parents. "We're thrilled when she calls us by name, though that hardly ever happens now," says Betty. She also recalls what she dubs a Hallmark moment: "I was playing *Ere zij God* on my parents' organ. Mom walked into the room and started singing the words. Then my dad and my sisters joined in and we were all singing together. And my Mom's face beamed with joy."

Susan's special moments with her Mom often happen when, at the end of a visit, she helps get her ready for bed. "I tuck her in just like she did with us as kids," Susan says. "I sing the prayer she taught us as children. She repeats some of the lines with me or she hums. When I leave, I kiss her and say 'I love you' and she says 'I love you, too.'"

In spite of how Alzheimer's "thousand subtractions" have robbed Betty's and Susan's mothers, God's grace embraces them as they are.

(\* Both women asked that their real names not be used in order to protect their fathers' privacy.)



## Alzheimer's

# Into the shadows

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Review of *Into the Shadows: A Journey of Faith and Love into Alzheimer's* by Robert F. DeHaan, FaithWalk Publishing, Grand Haven, Michigan, 2003)

Poignantly and honestly, DeHaan tells the story of the love he and his wife, Roberta, experienced during the "terrible passage into Roberta's Alzheimer's disease" and how God's love and grace surrounded them daily.

Roberta's life, full and complex, influenced many people. A bright and articulate woman, she taught high school mathematics, studied theology, took an internship in hospital chaplaincy, and taught for twenty years at an off-campus work/study program for college students. In her church community, First United Methodist Church of Germantown in Philadelphia, she was a mentor to many young women, as well as being involved in the Music Committee, the Evangelism Task Force, and a Bible discussion group. Her various gardens gave expression to her creativity and love for beauty. When she approached retirement, she looked for new avenues of growth and became a massage therapist. Summing up Roberta's life, DeHaan says, "Helping things and people to grow was her lifelong vocation."

### Dark Thursday

But insidiously and irrevocably Alzheimer's disease emptied her life of all these things.

When Roberta first showed signs of the disease, DeHaan convinced himself that her lapses were merely indications of aging. He later realized that Roberta was also aware that she was becoming increasingly confused. He concludes, "Thus we were both in denial. It made life easier at the time and enabled us to carry on against the encroaching shadows."

However, soon enough, DeHaan was confronted with the truth of Roberta's condition. On what he came to dub Dark Thursday, a morning in August 1999, Roberta forgot what day it was but showed no "sign of recognition of the significance

of her time-disorientation." That incident was DeHaan's "defining moment" when he accepted the fact that Roberta "had already entered into the shadows of Alzheimer's disease and there would be no turning back."

Initially filled with despair, DeHaan clung to God's strength and grace, and decided that his "new calling was to be an extension of the everlasting arms of the Almighty."

### Grace seldom comes in a thunderclap

DeHaan discovered that this new calling to care for Roberta would tax all his spiritual resources. However, he learned that God is faithful, and he was affirmed in his belief that "intimations of God's presence are often unusually clear in a series of seemingly accidental occurrences." He experienced that God often speaks in a "still, small voice" and concludes that "grace seldom comes in a thunderclap." His faith was nourished by reading John Baillie's *A Diary of Private Prayer*. DeHaan shares many of the powerful, vulnerable, and pleading prayers with readers.

As DeHaan dealt with Roberta's Alzheimer's symptoms — obsessive behavior, "the specter of fear" that haunted her, incontinence, personality changes, night wandering, and others — his love for her intensified and changed. He says, "It's a different kind of love from what I had for her when she was whole and well; it is now more protective and gentle."

Adeptly using metaphors or word pictures to portray Roberta's experience, DeHaan gives readers concrete images with which to understand the horror of the disease. In one metaphor, he pictures Roberta "trapped in a dungeon with each possible escape route blocked by a guard armed with a pillow with which he smothered her every attempt to escape. Alzheimer's disease is a passive restraint, an amorphous loss. It is the ultimate jailer; no one to date has escaped."

Roberta's purse with its many useful compartments for her paraphernalia becomes another metaphor for Alzheimer's disease. In a period of a month she no longer used the purse, giving away all its contents. DeHaan says, "Its loss illustrates the emptying of the life of an Alzheimer's patient."

### Communion

In several heart-rending scenes, DeHaan encapsulates the pain of saying goodbye to treasured activities, people, and celebrations. Each fall, he and Roberta had cleaned up her tomato garden. Taking it apart had been "a celebratory activity, a mini-Thanksgiving day."

But in the fall of 2000 he "realized with a certainty that she would never plant another tomato garden." He cried inside as he said farewell to something that had been so special to Roberta. Other emotional farewells with family, friends, and church community followed.

The chapter entitled "Communion" is the highlight of *Into the Shadows*. DeHaan notes that, though he and Roberta had for years participated in Holy Communion, almost taking it for granted as one would three meals a day, in their despair "it grew into an essential conduit of grace for raising our flagging spirits and energizing us for the journey." Of the Holy Communion they received with two friends before leaving Philadelphia to move to Grand Rapids, where they could be closer to family members, DeHaan writes, "It was a true Eucharist, a meal prepared in heaven by

God." Also, before DeHaan admitted Roberta into the Verblauw Alzheimer's Care Unit they celebrated communion privately, a simple supper before God's face. Afterward, Roberta's response — "That was Communion." — reveals how God speaks to his children through the fog of Alzheimer's disease.

Though reading an entire book on a person's experience with Alzheimer's disease might seem like a depressing undertaking, traveling on this journey with the DeHaans is just the opposite. One is left with deep affection for Roberta, admiration for DeHaan's courage, vulnerable truth-telling, and spiritual insights, and tremendous gratitude to God that he keeps his promise to never leave or forsake his children.

## Alzheimer's and the loss of self-identity

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Glenn Weaver, Professor of Psychology at Calvin College, Michigan, will have a chapter on spiritual suffering in people with Alzheimer's published in *From Cells to Souls and Beyond*, due to be released by Eerdmans in the spring of 2004. Edited by British psychologist Malcolm Jeeves, professor at St. Andrews University, the book includes chapters on Biblical theology of the body and soul, behavior genetics and human identity, the function of the brain and mystical experiences of transcendence, as well as others. Weaver's chapter is entitled "Embodied Spirituality: Experiences of Identity and Spiritual Suffering Among Persons With Alzheimer's Dementia."

In an e-mail interview with Christian Courier, Weaver described the contents of the chapter, the research that it's based on, and his mother's struggles with Alzheimer's dementia.

C. C.: Please give us a synopsis of the chapter.

Weaver: The chapter refers to contemporary research in neuropsychology to explain how our experiences of personal identity may be carried by functions of the brain and how the progressive damage to the brain associated with Alzheimer's dementia can alter these experiences of self. It then relates both my own research and case accounts recorded by others which describe the ways in which changes in self-identity throughout Alzheimer's dementia may bring changes to one's experiences, relationship with God, and relationship with other persons, and the spiritual suffering which these changes cause. Suggestions are given for ways in which communities of faith can contribute to upholding the self-identities of Alzheimer's victims and help to bring meaning to their suffering in the hope of the Christian faith.

C. C.: I understand that your mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and that you noticed changes in her spiritual life due to her illness. What changes did you notice?

Weaver: My mother suffered from Alzheimer's dementia for approximately 11 years prior to her death. The disease, especially in its early to middle stages, brought strong challenges to her faith. The changes focused on her forgetting the clear events of her past spiritual journey that served to anchor her present faith, and a sense of abandonment by God. I observed a number of times in my mother's experience when her sense of God's presence often seemed to return when my Dad or I spent time with her looking at familiar old photographs of persons and places important in her spiritual past, singing familiar hymns or gospel songs, looking at small things of nature, for example, a bird that returned to her window each day in the spring, and holding one another at times when she would become most agitated.

C. C.: Tell me about the research you initiated at Calvin College that was incorporated into your chapter.

Weaver: The research that I have been conducting with the team of Calvin psychology students has done structured interviews with family members of persons with Alzheimer's dementia. These interview and behavior inventories seek to identify patterns in changes that occur along such dimensions as memory process, interpersonal relationships, experiences of self-identity, and experiences of faith. So far we have found patterns in which significant changes in memory lead to changes in the other dimensions in approximately 30 percent of persons with Alzheimer's dementia who are described in our interviews.





## Christian Living

## Why go to church 22b

## To celebrate the liberation of the world (continued)

A. A. van Ruler  
Summary

Why go to Church? This is part two of Van Ruler's summation of all the answers he has given: To celebrate the liberation of the world.

This is not a concealed mystery, says Van Ruler, it has been revealed and it has become reality. God poured out his heart in and through Christ. In Christ the world has been and is being liberated.

Therefore, the world is destined to become the kingdom of God. Redemption does not involve our separation from the world; all things, including our bodily selves, are redeemed together in their totality and in their unity.

This will happen at the end of time, so it is the content of our hope. But it is already happening now in our present history.

The resurrection teaches us that we are here forever. The kingdom of God's grace that has come in Christ does not touch down only momentarily like a seagull on water, it remains here on earth in his Spirit. The liberation of the world is, thus, both an eschatological and a historical reality.

Being is filled to the brim with the work of the Spirit, and it is given to the church to celebrate

redeemed being. It is our realization of this reality that fills us with amazement and joy. And it is this joy that is our fuel for living a life of celebration.

The object of God's redemption is a new heaven and a new earth, which includes a new humanity. The scope of the gospel is universal: although some harden themselves, all people are invited into fellowship with Christ. The kingdom of God includes our being reconciled to one another; it is social in nature. It also gathers in history and nature. The entire universe bathes in the brightness of God's glory.

Here we continue our translation of Van Ruler's culminating chapter.

### The absurdity of our claims

These have been incredibly grand claims. Can anyone truly believe them? Nevertheless, this is what the gospel tells us: the world is being redeemed and the Redeemer has come. Even if we could clear away all other stumbling blocks, such as the virgin birth, the empty tomb, the ascension, Jesus' divinity and the trinity, this one would remain. It is the greatest absurdity of all.

The celebration of the liberation of all things, also of our total existence, undergirds almost every part of our worship. Even humbling ourselves and confessing our sins imply our liberation. We need not act as if we're at a funeral, for these too have a festive dimension.

This celebration of liberation is more obvious in other parts of the liturgy. It comes to clearest expression in our praise, when we sing. Seen rightly, singing a song of praise to our Creator and Redeemer is just as absurd as the idea that the totality of reality has been redeemed. Praise God? How can we presume something so outlandish – in the middle of this absurd world and this doomed existence?

But this is what the liturgy and the church are for: to celebrate redemption. This is why we go to church. Where else can we celebrate the redemption of the world?

It begins with the message of the Redeemer who has come and of the work he has accomplished. This is a message so incredible it must be repeated anew every Sunday. The proclamation of this message keeps the rushing stream of the Spirit's work moving on. We come together as a congregation to pick up on the melody that sounds in this rushing stream and to hum along. And soon the humming turns into singing. And then the singing turns into play. This play is the liturgy, which reaches its climax in thanksgiving, in praise, in eulogy, in the Lord's Supper.

If you go to church in full awareness, you realize that many of the words we use there make incredibly big claims. Once you've become aware, you become sensitive to the fact that every moment of the whole business is absurd.

You don't have to be an outsider to see it all as absurd and extreme. But to really see its ridiculousness, you have to go faithfully for years. Only then do you learn what all those things that happen in a worship service are all about and how deeply they probe the heart. Then, when a simple sentence from a psalm or a moment during prayer suddenly sends an electric shock of awareness at the absurdity of it shooting through you, you have reached the point of churchgoing when you always



A detail from an eighteenth century Russian icon entitled "Lord Almighty"

experience yourself as an outsider, as unchurched.

To use the words of Kierkegaard, I myself may stand outside, but I can vividly imagine what it would mean to be a genuine Christian, namely, what it is to live the truth of liberation.

This stance is, however, on the other side of being churchd – not before, but afterwards. It isn't as assertive as being unchurched in the usual sense of the word. It is subdued, because it is deeply surprised, so surprised that it cannot get over its surprise.

Abraham, the father of all believers, laughed. He laughed at the Lord God. When we go to church, we too laugh. The church is a hall of distorting mirrors in which the world looks absurd. It looks as if it has been redeemed!

### Celebrating is the real work of the church

Is there more to the liturgy than merely celebrating the world's liberation? Does it demand that we pitch in and do our part in this liberation? Must we take the job on ourselves?

Here I want to glance at the Eastern Orthodox Church. As a church she does not engage in either social or political activism. She does almost nothing in the way of speaking prophetically to the authorities. Why not? Because she disparages created reality and ignores it? No, but because she experiences the transfiguration, the glorification, the total redemption of all of reality in its liturgy. That is faith!

She assumes, she trusts fully that the incarnation of the Word has not been in vain, that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is fully realized, that the totality of salvation is played out in her liturgy and that this is where created reality undergoes redemption.

As I see it, this attitude displays some very deep themes of the gospel of love. Love covers all things, believes all things, endures all things, hopes all things. She bears all things through the worst the world has to offer. She comes through. Just as Jesus wholly accepted his fear and gave expression to it, passing through the loss of being, so Eastern Orthodoxy accepts the world, saying, "Celebrating the liturgy is enough, for this is doing the real work of redemption."

**This is the essence of it all: existence rejoicing at its own being. But there is every reason to think that we, fallen sinners, are no longer able to celebrate in this way.**

Western Christianity has a very different attitude. It is action oriented, striding-forth into the world. It wants to take on reality and change it. On this score there is very little difference between Rome and Reformation. It is true that Rome wants (or wanted) to stress the vertical and the Reformation the horizontal; Rome wants (wanted) to do it by asceticism and the Reformation by being prophetic. But both wanted



An eighteenth century Russian icon detail "Christus Pantocrator"



## Christian Living

to launch a frontal attack on the state of the world as it is. To accuse western Christendom of political and social conservatism, therefore, strikes me as far-fetched. Such a charge betrays unfamiliarity with the history of the church, unless you limit yourself to a short period in the nineteenth century.

Where should we position ourselves – with eastern or with western Christendom? I think we must never forget the stance of Eastern Orthodoxy for it is an essential moment in Christian existence. We should not speak evil of it. We should absorb it into the deepest part of our own existence and our own attitude.

### The banner of the kingdom

But that does not detract from the fact that we must also understand the West – ourselves. What is the core of the Western stance? Our attack on the world, as we understand it, begins as soon as we ourselves begin leading a more or less redeemed existence. We don't just go to church. We don't just celebrate liturgically. Something is also changed in our hearts: they are awakened to the beginnings of eternal joy. And something also changes in our lives: we get a (small and tainted) beginning of eternal obedience that sanctifies the whole of life. But the heart and our lives are also part of the world. They are redeemed, liberated! With our participation, for they are not just results of the liturgy but also conscious deeds. As co-workers of the Spirit, we stylize as far as we are able our inward as well as our outward existence.

This is expansive; it does not limit itself to the heart and to the life of the individual. The liturgy gathers together the knights of the kingdom. Before they set out on their crusade, they pass in review and they renew their oath to uphold their code of honor. They engage the world, demons, untruth and evil. They raise high the cross as the banner of the kingdom.

There is, indeed, an active, even a militant side to the kingdom. On the other pole from Eastern Orthodoxy, there is the Salvation Army. The latter too merits a close look in connection with our answer. It is an encouraging look. The Salvation Army ventures into the back alleys and slums of our inner cities, reaching places the churches hardly touch. The sad thing about the Salvation Army is that it targets only individuals and deliberately pays no attention to

the structures of the state and society.

The church may not be seduced into adopting such a position. That would be making things too easy for herself. The church is an army for salvation, going into battle with the apostolic gospel. It wants to christianize the whole world. Not that it wants to turn it into the church. Although it wants to bring the unchurched into the church, it does not want to bring what is outside the church – politics, economics, social and cultural life – into the orbit of the church. These must remain outside the church, but they must be christianized. They must be conformed to the pattern of Christ, and Christ must also become present in all these areas, a presence unique to each. In this way, the church as well as Christians themselves must be busy with the redemption of the world.

There are two things that we must not overlook: first, in mobilizing, the knights of the

The form of Christ must be impressed upon and into all things. This form is not identical with the human form, certainly not with that of fallen humanity. It is not even identical with the form of humanity at creation or of humanity glorified. Therefore, the only thing that knights of the kingdom can do when they go into action is to go on crusade.

Secondly, we must not forget that a crusade is a battle not immediate victory. There are many battles, humiliating defeats. We cannot, for example, do away with NATO because the Messiah has come and we can enter directly into the shalom of messianic life. The "application" of the gospel to politics and social issues nowadays is dominated by an unprecedented and shallow perfectionism and impatience. We want to force reconciliation in Christ to be reconciliation among classes, races and nations. We boldly barge ahead.

But we have to ask ourselves whether in doing so we aren't

that, inspired by the gospel. Christians must enthusiastically participate in politics to create social progress because the movement of history itself is toward liberation. Others theorize that God works in the world incognito to liberate it. The first strikes me as outright heresy and the second as no more than a half-truth.

### Not yet glorified children

In any case, we go to church to celebrate the liberation of the world. This is how we get solid ground under our feet. There we learn once again that we are not stumbling about in a meaningless, absurd world that is doomed and in which we are abandoned to fate.

This is how many do experience themselves and their place in the world. We might say that here the truth of predestination has been deformed into its opposite – into fate. As a result, many find themselves staring into the darkness and filled with despair.

rejoice in – liberation or pure being?

Are we capable of genuinely, enthusiastically celebrating being? I think we are meant to do so. This is the essence of it all: existence rejoicing at its own being. But there is every reason to think that we, fallen sinners, are no longer able to celebrate in this way. We are not yet glorified children of God.

That's why we feel overloaded when we nevertheless try to live in the pure joy in pure being. We simply cannot muster that kind of joy. Existence as such has become a burden to us. Anyone who attempts to live in this way, even if he has been born again, will sooner or later tail off into depression and despair.

We do well, therefore, to restrain ourselves somewhat and for the time being to concentrate on salvation, redemption. We are better able to rejoice in salvation than in being. At the very least, we can be members of the church, go faithfully, feel the melody of the song of liberation wash over us and sing along with it. We are seized with inner delight that the world has been redeemed, liberated. This is difficult enough.

The human heart can hardly bear the full joy of total salvation. It stays with the small beginnings. But if we are truly converted, we can nevertheless experience a foretaste of it. We can more easily perhaps rejoice in Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer than in our own being.

All in all, it is good to close this series of reflections on the question, Why go to church? by answering: To celebrate the liberation of the world!

But then we must remember that this still doesn't get to the heart of it: that would be to rejoice in the world itself, in being as such, on the other side of redemption. For we know on the basis of the apostolic gospel that fundamentally all liturgy, all worship is creaturely praise. Every time we go to church we get a hint of this core truth as we stand there filled with joy at God's salvation, knowing we are on the way to rejoicing in pure being.

*The vanRuler series,  
"Why go to Church"*

*is now available on our  
website:*

[www.christiancourier.ca](http://www.christiancourier.ca)

*Click on  
feature articles.*



*Jacob van Ruisdael's paintings are often dominated by sky and light. The light casts a glow on the landscape and the steeple points back to the heavens. One gets the impression of the holiness of the ordinary world.*

kingdom may engage only in crusades. This word has taken on bad connotations nowadays. But crusades were also an expression of "the imperialism of the early Christian spirit." They were filled with the awareness that the Redeemer has come, that salvation is at hand, and that we are charged to spread the apostolic gospel. And the gospel wants to touch, to transform, to renew everything.

applying our trust in Christ's accomplished work in an ungodly way. It is the Holy Spirit that continues his work. Although he uses us, this work goes forward with incredibly numerous difficulties and complications. Many radical Christians forget this, just as they forget the necessity of christianization and the unavoidability of the crusade.

Some have proposed the theory

To be cured of this sickness-unto-death and this despair is another reason we go to church. There we hear the good news of liberation and redemption. And we celebrate. We are filled with joy. We receive a boundless courage over toward the world, and we can even rejoice in the world.

Perhaps it would be wise to rein ourselves in somewhat. On the basis of the gospel, what do we



## Caregiving/Theology

# Caregiver support groups: a primer

Lisa Petsche

If you're a caregiver to a chronically ill relative, you may have read articles that suggest joining a support group to prevent burnout. Perhaps you're reluctant, though, wondering what caregiver groups are all about and whether one would be of benefit to you.

The goal of these groups is to enhance caregivers' coping skills, through the provision of mutual support and sharing of information.

Objectives may include validating the important role of family caregivers, exploring the challenges and rewards involved in caregiving, acknowledging the emotional impact of a family member's illness, exploring coping strategies, and engaging in group problem-solving regarding practical issues.

Support groups also provide education about disease processes, behavioral issues and management strategies; identify and address barriers that the chronically ill and their caregivers encounter in the community; promote effective use of community resources; and help caregivers balance their needs with those of their relative.

## People who understand

Caregiver support groups help you realize you are not alone in your situation. They give you an opportunity to express your thoughts and feelings in an empathic, non-judgmental environment, where you can learn from the experiences of other caregivers.

Some people worry that hearing about other people's difficulties will only make them feel worse. However, after attending a couple of group sessions, most find them beneficial.

## Types of groups

Caregiver groups may be general — that is, open to all caregivers — or specific to certain populations (for example, caregivers of older adults) or illnesses (such as Alzheimer's disease).

Some groups are structured, with set agendas, and time-limited (typically four to six weekly or biweekly sessions). Led by health care professionals, such as a social worker or nurse, they are primarily educational in nature, and often include guest speakers. Pre-registration is usually requested.

In contrast, informal groups focus primarily on emotional support, with members sharing thoughts, feelings and experiences. Facilitators may be experienced caregivers or professionals who work with caregivers. Meetings are usually held monthly, and new members are welcomed on an ongoing basis.

Some groups may be a combination of the above two types, alternating between educational and support sessions, or scheduling time for both in each meeting.



A group puts their heads together at a diaconal conference - small groups are a great support.

## Factors to consider when choosing a group

- Convenience: time of day offered; frequency and location of meetings; availability of concurrent care for your relative.

- Commitment required: time-limited groups require regular attendance, whereas informal groups usually operate on a come-when-you-can basis. (Keep in mind that the more regularly you attend, the greater your comfort level will be and the more you're likely to get out of the experience.)

- Purpose: do the group's stated goals and objectives coincide with what you're looking for in terms of support and/or information?

- Facilitator's background and experience with caregiving issues and leading groups.

## Tips for first-timers

- Make contact with the facilitator in advance, or prior to the start of the meeting, to introduce yourself and share a bit about your situation (e.g., the nature of your relative's illness, your relationship to him/her, how long you've been providing care).

- Bring a friend with you.

- If there's a social time at the end of the meeting, stay and mingle with other caregivers.

- Attend more than one meeting before deciding if a particular group is right for you — some people require a few sessions to feel comfortable.

## Evaluating a group

- Is the physical setting comfortable and distraction-free?

- Are group norms — such as taking turns, respecting differing viewpoints and maintaining confidentiality — clearly articulated and adhered to?

- Can you relate to other members' experiences, perceiving a common bond with them? Is the environment one of understanding and acceptance, such that you feel comfortable sharing in the group?

- Does the facilitator appear knowledgeable about caregiving issues and relevant community resources? Is he/she a good leader — confident, articulate, sensitive, empathic, flexible, and skilled in maintaining focus, generating discussion, preventing individuals from dominating, gently drawing out less vocal members, and recognizing when someone needs more help than the group can provide?

Highly rated groups also emphasize caregiver strengths, incorporate humor, and include a social time where caregivers can build relationships that eventually may extend beyond the group.

## More private alternatives

If your first support group experience turns out to be unsatisfactory, consider trying a different group before concluding that support groups aren't for you.

But it's true that such a setting is not

suited to everyone, including people who are very shy or private in nature, those who are self-focused (either as a longstanding personality trait or due to extreme stress), and those who have significant, often longstanding personal issues — for example, a psychiatric illness or a conflicted relationship with the care recipient. In such cases, individual counseling is usually recommended.

Practical reasons why attending a group may not be feasible include severe hearing impairment, and being unable to obtain respite care or transportation. Caregivers in these situations may wish to explore alternatives to traditional support groups, such as telephone support networks, online message boards, chat rooms, e-mail mailing lists, or discussion forums that address caregiving issues. These have the convenience of being accessible from home 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Internet communities also offer anonymity for those who wish to keep their identity private.

*Lisa M. Petsche is a social worker with experience in developing and facilitating support groups for caregivers of older adults.*

## Where to find information on caregiver groups

- Hospital or community social worker
- Non-profit organization associated with your relative's disease or condition
- Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)
- Community calendar of your local newspaper
- Seniors centre bulletin board
- Community information service
- Local public health department or mental health association. (END)

# "Women who exercise the gift of prophecy"

By Tony Campolo

When the Bible speaks of prophesying, it includes what we understand to be preaching. And it is quite clear from Scripture that women preachers were very much a part of the life of the early Church.

We read in Acts 18:26 that Priscilla and Aquilla taught Apollos and corrected his theology. In I Corinthians 15:5, we find that women not only prophesied (preached) but that Paul actually instructed them as to how they should dress when they did it. In Acts 21:9, we find that Phillip had four daughters, each of whom had the gift of prophecy. And in Philippians 4:3, we read about Euodia and Syntyche who served as leaders in the early church. The highest vocation in Christendom was to be part of the apostolic church session, and in Romans 16:7 we find

a woman named Junia listed as one who held this lofty office.

Given these Biblical examples and several others that could easily be brought forward, it seems strange to me that the largest Protestant denomination in America [the Southern Baptist Churches] should recently have passed resolutions that bar women from being preachers or pastors of churches. They supported their decision, by referring to I Timothy 2:11, which suggests that women ought to keep silent in church.

Of course, those who lean so heavily on this passage are prone to ignore the fact that several verses earlier the writer of this book attacks women who braid their hair or cut it and condemns the wearing of any form of

...see *Prophecy* page 17



## Opinion

## Prophecy

...continued from page 16

jewelry. Consistency would require that those who want strict adherence to the second chapter of I Timothy should require all the women in their congregations to let their hair grow long and to take off their wedding rings!

## Jesus was a feminist

The feminist movement, with some justification, has accused evangelical Christianity of propagating male chauvinism. Many of these feminists would argue that in calling upon women to be submissive to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22) these evangelicals have encouraged women to endure destructive abuse and may, in some instances even have encouraged it. Consequently, in some feminist circles, even the mention of evangelicalism will elicit incredibly intense animosity.

What would surprise most of those in today's women's liberation movements is that Jesus was a feminist. He called for an end of the hierarchy that establishes males as some kind of superior species. Furthermore, the apostle Paul made clear that the divisions which reduced women to second-class spiritual citizenship were obliterated by what Christ did for us on the cross (Galatians 3:28).

The modern feminist movement can trace some of its roots to the revivalism of Charles Finney, a great evangelical preacher of the nineteenth century. When Finney called upon people to accept Christ as their personal saviour, he required them simultaneously to commit themselves to working for either the abolitionist movement or the feminist movement. Francis Willard, who founded the Women's Temperance Union and was president of the college that eventually became Northwestern University, was part of this evangelical movement, and she eventually became a co-worker with the great Dwight L. Moody as he led evangelistic crusades in cities across America and throughout the United Kingdom.

It is important to recognize that those who oppose the ordination of women do not make their case on the ground that women lack the abilities necessary for preaching. Competency is not in doubt. As has been said, anything Fred Etaire could do, Ginger Rogers could do in high heels and backwards. It must be noted, difficult as it is to explain, that is why the same evangelical leaders who would bar women from preaching here in our country are quite willing to send them to be missionaries in Africa and Asia.

It seems that they don't mind allowing women to preach in conditions that are marked by extreme danger and suffering. They just don't want them doing it around here, where comfort and prestige often go with the role of preacher.

In the 1800's, almost half the Baptist preachers in Maine and Wisconsin were women, and there are stories of female missionaries struggling through waist deep snow in their endeavors to declare the gospel to Native Americans in North and South Dakota. The incongruity of sending women to preach as missionaries but not allowing them to occupy prestigious pulpits here in America smacks of duplicity and hypocrisy.

The time has come for Christianity to shed the sin of male chauvinism. The church needs women in key roles of leadership.

*Tony Campolo is a popular evangelical writer and speaker who is professor emeritus of Sociology at Eastern University in Saint David's, Pennsylvania. He has written 28 books.*



## By Tymen Hofman

Cobi and I went to Holland, Michigan in May to participate in Tulip Time. Every year for 74 years the City of Holland has sponsored a week to ten days of celebration centered around its Dutch heritage. Masses of tulips are in full bloom all over the city and on huge tulip farms. It is the greatest tulip festival in North America, and while there are millions more tulips in the Netherlands, it may be that nowhere is there such a Tulip Time as in Holland, Michigan.

I won't go into all the aspects of this great display of natural beauty and civic pride but at Tulip Time, what isn't Dutch isn't much! Every Hollander (and I'm referring to residents of Holland, Michigan) is involved in one way or another, with the possible exception of some Hispanics, who seem to sit on the sidelines to pout because they can't sport their heritage along with the tulips. Their Cinco de Mayo, May 5th, can't even be said in the same breath as Tulip Time. Everybody else is Dutch for ten days.

This festival is widely known. Tourist busses by the hundreds pull into town to take in the goodies, often staying for a day or more. All these tourists must have something more to do than look at tulips and wooden shoes, so the committee does everything it can to present entertainment features which it draws from the ranks of its "Dutch" citizenry.

Most prominent are the participants in the famous klompen dansen [clog dances]. The dancers are paired-up girls, mostly, dressed in the great variety of authentic Dutch costumes from the various areas in the Netherlands, with all the dancers in klompen, dancing in groups and in pairs. Over half of the costumes are women's and a smaller number are men's. Every day the main drag is taken over for this great outdoor show, with 624 alumni dancers in 52 groups of twelve and 708 in 57 high school groups. The genuinely Dutch music inspires them to present an enthusiastic and beautiful demonstration of Dutch celebration.



It is all so uniquely Dutch that modern day Netherlanders have to come to Holland to experience it.

A Dutch costume is a must for anyone having any connection with the festivities.

To accommodate the hungry crowds, row upon row of food services fill every available space in the downtown area. This year they added a beer tent in an attempt to boost a sagging number of tourists after all these years of "tulips." That problem has also led to importing as many big name entertainment people as it can afford, detracting somewhat from the cultural celebration of the Dutch in Holland, Michigan. But as much as is possible, the entertainers are local stars who set their annual goal for a great performance at Tulip Time.

One such group is the Holland Chorale, a choir of 75 singers, dancers and instrumentalists, which presented a very professional-quality variety program with emphasis on the patriotic and the traditional stage shows of another era. It put on a dazzling display of music, dance and humor. The 90 minutes passed all too quickly. The program was presented in the very comfortable Wesleyan Methodist mega-church, seating well over 2,000. And the place was sold out. We attended as the guests of my sister and her husband, in fine seats near the front. To avoid the rush we came fairly early.

I ended up seated next to a matronly lady reading a magazine which I soon discovered was a copy of *The Banner*. That immediately roused my curiosity and I couldn't help but comment. "I see you are reading *The Banner*."

"Yes," she said, "I got it from my neighbor. I want to read the article about Lew Smedes. I don't get *The Banner*. I'm not Christian Reformed."

"So which is your church?" I asked her.

"I was born Catholic, I was saved in a Baptist church, and I married Reformed."

She also got around to ferreting out my origins and so on, including the fact that I was a retired preacher, which meant I had explain to her why I have such a very bad voice. Cancer aftermath.

"But you didn't ever smoke?" she quickly inquired.

"Well yes I did, a pipe, a good while ago. But that had no connection with my cancer."

That sort of brought the conversation to an end. She went back to reading about Smedes.

But that was not the end of my awareness of this well-meaning soul sitting next to me in the pew. As the choir got into some of the fine old favorites, she could not contain her exuberance and began to hum right along with the singers. One number after another, very audible and disturbing, she hummed away, with the forte parts and the pianissimos, and her husband didn't turn a hair. When it was clear there would be no reprieve from this concert in my left ear, I began to shove to the right, moving Cobi down in the direction of my sister, hoping she would send her husband farther down the line and

so I could listen to the concert of my choice. She was a nice lady, but I couldn't help thinking that if she had been a good Calvinist she might have had some respect for my "sphere of sovereignty."



*Ty Hofman is a Yankee-Canuck and retired minister of the Christian Reformed Church who lives in Grand Rapids, Mich.*



## African News

# Canada to send troops to the Congo

Roaming the Congo are child soldiers who have experienced horrors that traumatize even veteran soldiers. They strut about, these boys in their early teens and younger, proudly, fiercely displaying their rifles and machine guns. They have not only seen unspeakable atrocities, they have committed them. Again and again.

They've hunted and shot down innocent, unarmed people in the streets of numerous towns, butchered them in village market places, in their homes, and in their hiding places – for no reason other than that they are from the wrong tribe or village. They've shot some, hacked some to death with machetes, and speared some. Their victims number in the hundreds, thousands. Some they've let live, only hacking off arms or legs. They've burned and looted. They've gang-raped women and girls – brutally. Thousands. Hurting, maiming, killing. There have even been reports of cannibalism.

The UN estimates that there are as many as 10,000 boy soldiers in the Congo alone. But they are seen all through the area. At one time or another there have been soldiers from nine different countries causing havoc in the country and almost all have used young boys as soldiers. And young girls for other purposes.

The anarchy is not limited to the Congo, it has infected one country after another in western Africa – Liberia, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic. We have heard about the genocide in Rwanda, where the UN intervened only after an estimated 800,000 Rwandans were slaughtered in three months. The five-year war in the Congo, despite UN intervention, has killed over 3 million people.

The latest killings that have drawn the attention of the press and the UN are ironically the result of a peace accord signed last year which led to the pullout of soldiers from neighboring Uganda. Around the city of Bunia in northeast Congo fighting



between the rival Hema and Lendu peoples resulted in over 450 deaths and thousands of refugees who are fleeing the fighting. At the time of this writing, conditions for some 15,000 people who had taken shelter in a UN compound were critical due to a shortage of food and water.

Canada agreed to participate in a force of 1,400 UN peacekeepers led by France to restore order. The European Union has also committed itself to support. Although there was a small UN force in Bunia, they were there only as observers and were not allowed to interfere. In mid-May two of them were savagely slain when on patrol. The new UN forces will have a mandate to shoot if necessary.

The two tribes, traditionally cattlemen and farmers, have squabbled over territory in Ituri from time immemorial, but government forces from Uganda, Rwanda and the Congo itself armed various factions in a bid to get control of the areas' rich mineral deposits and timber. In 1997 troops from Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe waged war on Congo soil. The fighting continued till last year despite

the presence of some 5,000 UN peacekeepers. Even after the peace accord signed last year, fighting has continued in certain areas.

Last March Amnesty International released a report entitled "On the precipice: the deepening human rights and humanitarian crisis in Ituri" because already at that time about 50,000 people had been killed in fighting between the Hema and Lendu. The report called on the UN to reinforce its presence there, and it charged the Ugandan forces to live up to its mandate to protect the people of the region. Instead of bringing peace, the Ugandans sold arms to various factions and trained militias, including young boys, shifting their allegiance to manipulate the conflict to their advantage. Amnesty said that the Ugandan government contributed to the chaos and violence that has engulfed the region.

## Liberian rebels threaten capital city

While Liberian President Charles Taylor was dodging an arrest warrant issued for him as he attended a peace conference in Ghana, rebel forces besieged Monrovia, the capital of Liberia. According to reports from the crowded capital city, the sound of artillery and machine gun fire sent people fleeing for safety. Tens of thousands sought it at the US embassy, where they begged the US to intervene. Crowds of Liberians pressed against the gates demanding that they be opened.

Two rebel armies, which already control two-thirds of the country, closed in on the city when news came out that Taylor was to be ar-

rested. The news immediately created panic in the capital city.

Delegates of the rebels at the Ghana peace conference had promised their men would not fight during the talks, but they were moving into the refugee camps on the outskirts of the city anyway. Liberia has been fighting a bloody civil war for the last three years, and about one-third of its three million citizens have been turned into refugees. There are seven refugee camps around the city of Monrovia alone. Monrovia now holds one third of the country's total population.

Liberia was founded in the 19th century by freed slaves from the US. They provided stable, but not democratic, rule until 1980. The group that came from America became the ruling class and the indigenous people an underclass with little or no power. The government was overthrown by a violent coup in 1980 led by

an ignorant lieutenant. He became the new dictator and his inept and corrupt regime threw the country into chaos, eventually arousing rebellion among the people.

Taylor was one of the rebel leaders in 1989. He was educated in the US and entered the Liberian civil service, where he was charged with embezzlement. He fled to the US, where he was briefly imprisoned, escaping to Libya. There he received military training from Muammar Gaddafi, returning to Liberia to foment a campaign of terror that seven years later catapulted him into power.

A warrant was issued against him charging that he and his cronies have employed child soldiers, abduction, enslavement, rape, maimings and amputations in Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Guinea and Burkina Faso in order to enrich themselves in the diamond trade and arms dealing with warring factions across western Africa. Taylor's latest mercenary venture was plundering timber from Liberia's rain forests. The UN has already slapped a ban on all Liberian timber exports.

Conditions are too dangerous in the country for aid agencies to supply food to the tens of thousands of internally displaced people. Thousands have also fled into neighboring Sierra Leone, where there are more refugee camps.

Unrest in neighboring Ivory Coast, however, has caused an inflow of refugees from that country into Liberia in the south, as well as into Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso and Ghana. The UN has called the refugee situation in Ivory Coast critical and in Liberia desperate.

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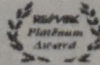


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## Classifieds

Personals	Anniversaries	
<p>"Hi A.D." If you responded to File No. 2735 a few months ago and are still interested, please send another letter. (Sorry, the letter was misplaced.) (29 year-old Christian female seeking male who has strong Christian values.) Reply to: Box 2735, 1 Hiscott St., St. Catharines ON L2R 1C7</p>	<p>1953 July 11 2003</p> <p>With thankfulness to God for His great faithfulness and love we rejoice and celebrate <b>50 Years of Marriage</b> with our parents and grandparents</p> <p><b>HANS and CORRIE MEIBOOM</b> (nee VanderWerf)</p> <p>Love and best wishes from their children and grandchildren: John &amp; Beth Meiboom, North York Lucas, Justin, Nicholas Boreas &amp; Linda Meiboom, Strathroy Daniel, Rebekka Frank &amp; Bev Meiboom, Frankford Kristy, Katie, Andrew, Nicole Fred &amp; Carol Vellekoop, Belleville Eric, Jacky, Adam</p> <p>An <b>Open House</b> will be held, the Lord willing, at Ebenezer CRC, 18 Fourth Ave., Trenton, Ont. on Saturday July 12 from 1 - 3 p.m. <i>Best Wishes only please.</i></p> <p>Home address: 31 First Ave. Trenton ON K8V 4C2</p>	<p>1953 June 5 2003</p> <p>God has kept us and blessed us, and we are grateful to God. The children and grandchildren of <b>SJOERD and HERMINA ANDRINGA</b> (nee Stad)</p> <p>hope to celebrate their <b>50th Anniversary</b> with family on July 11. <b>Open House on July 12, 1 - 4 p.m.</b> at Niton Community Center, Niton Junction AB <i>Best Wishes Only</i></p> <p>Their thankful children: Herman &amp; Penny Andringa, Niton Jct. AB Tice Andringa, Niton Jct AB Henry &amp; Sharon Andringa, Telkwa BC Rose Ann, John, Douglas, Kathy Aleida &amp; Dave (t) Rabbitt, Surrey BC Dick Andringa, Niton Jct AB Joyce &amp; Lenard Vriend Telkwa BC Natan, Natasha</p> <p>"The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." Psalm 18:2</p> <p>Home address: Mr. &amp; Mrs. Sjoerd Andringa Box 115, Niton Jct AB T0E 1S0</p>
<p><b>Widow seeks companion:</b> Dutch-Canadian Christian widow, living in S.W. Ontario would like to meet a Christian gentleman between ages 70-75 to share future with and serve the Lord together. Please reply to: Box 2738, 1 Hiscott St. St. Catharines ON L2R 1C7</p>	<p>1953 July 16 2003</p> <p>"... on their way rejoicing." Acts 8:39c</p> <p>We are celebrating the <b>50th Wedding Anniversary</b> of our parents</p> <p><b>EVERT and KLAZIENA WASSINK</b> (nee VanHarten)</p> <p>We thank God for you and pray He will continue to bless you with good health and many more happy years together. With love from your children: Connie &amp; Francis VanRooyen, Woodstock ON John &amp; Carol Wassink, Leduc AB Diana Wassink &amp; Bill Zylstra, Samia ON Margaret &amp; Al Groenewold, San Marcos CA Dick Wassink &amp; Janette Winter-Wassink, Forest ON Clarence &amp; Alice Wassink, London ON Otto &amp; Gracia Wassink, Ayr ON Evelyn &amp; Henry Dreise, Dorchester ON Arno &amp; Kathy Wassink, Kitchener ON 35 grandchildren &amp; 6 great-grandchildren</p> <p><b>Open House</b> will be held at their home on July 5, 2003 from 2 - 4 p.m. Home Address: 6894 Brush Rd, RR #6 Forest ON N0N 1J0</p>	<p>1943 July 1 &amp; July 4 2003</p> <p><b>BAS and ROELY NEDERLOF</b></p> <p><b>60 years of Marriage</b> "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," Ephesians 4:5</p> <p><b>60 years of Ministry</b> "who holds the seven stars in his right hand," Revelation 2:1b</p> <p>To celebrate, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren would like to honor them with your presence at an <b>Open House</b> on Tuesday, July 1st from 3 - 5 p.m. at the Vancouver Christian Reformed Church, 2670 Victoria Dr., Vancouver, B.C.</p> <p>With love: Nancy, Bob &amp; Katie Elsy &amp; Rich, Erik, Anna, Sara Rochelle &amp; Stefan, Eline &amp; Noah Theo &amp; Debbie, April &amp; Kyle Rick &amp; MJ, Krista &amp; Brianna</p> <p>Home Address: #808-3755 McGill St. Burnaby BC V5C 1M2</p>
<p><b>Wedding</b></p> <p>John &amp; Marge Postuma and William &amp; Geraldine Deboer are thrilled to announce the forthcoming marriage of their children,</p>	<p>1953 July 16 2003</p> <p>"... on their way rejoicing." Acts 8:39c</p> <p>We are celebrating the <b>50th Wedding Anniversary</b> of our parents</p> <p><b>EVERT and KLAZIENA WASSINK</b> (nee VanHarten)</p> <p>We thank God for you and pray He will continue to bless you with good health and many more happy years together. With love from your children: Connie &amp; Francis VanRooyen, Woodstock ON John &amp; Carol Wassink, Leduc AB Diana Wassink &amp; Bill Zylstra, Samia ON Margaret &amp; Al Groenewold, San Marcos CA Dick Wassink &amp; Janette Winter-Wassink, Forest ON Clarence &amp; Alice Wassink, London ON Otto &amp; Gracia Wassink, Ayr ON Evelyn &amp; Henry Dreise, Dorchester ON Arno &amp; Kathy Wassink, Kitchener ON 35 grandchildren &amp; 6 great-grandchildren</p> <p><b>Open House</b> will be held at their home on July 5, 2003 from 2 - 4 p.m. Home Address: 6894 Brush Rd, RR #6 Forest ON N0N 1J0</p>	<p>1943 July 1 &amp; July 4 2003</p> <p><b>BAS and ROELY NEDERLOF</b></p> <p><b>60 years of Marriage</b> "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," Ephesians 4:5</p> <p><b>60 years of Ministry</b> "who holds the seven stars in his right hand," Revelation 2:1b</p> <p>To celebrate, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren would like to honor them with your presence at an <b>Open House</b> on Tuesday, July 1st from 3 - 5 p.m. at the Vancouver Christian Reformed Church, 2670 Victoria Dr., Vancouver, B.C.</p> <p>With love: Nancy, Bob &amp; Katie Elsy &amp; Rich, Erik, Anna, Sara Rochelle &amp; Stefan, Eline &amp; Noah Theo &amp; Debbie, April &amp; Kyle Rick &amp; MJ, Krista &amp; Brianna</p> <p>Home Address: #808-3755 McGill St. Burnaby BC V5C 1M2</p>
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<p><b>Michelle Elisabeth and Paul William</b> on Saturday, June 28, 2003. May their lives always reflect Christ's love!</p>	<p>1953 July 16 2003</p> <p>"... on their way rejoicing." Acts 8:39c</p> <p>We are celebrating the <b>50th Wedding Anniversary</b> of our parents</p> <p><b>EVERT and KLAZIENA WASSINK</b> (nee VanHarten)</p> <p>We thank God for you and pray He will continue to bless you with good health and many more happy years together. With love from your children: Connie &amp; Francis VanRooyen, Woodstock ON John &amp; Carol Wassink, Leduc AB Diana Wassink &amp; Bill Zylstra, Samia ON Margaret &amp; Al Groenewold, San Marcos CA Dick Wassink &amp; Janette Winter-Wassink, Forest ON Clarence &amp; Alice Wassink, London ON Otto &amp; Gracia Wassink, Ayr ON Evelyn &amp; Henry Dreise, Dorchester ON Arno &amp; Kathy Wassink, Kitchener ON 35 grandchildren &amp; 6 great-grandchildren</p> <p><b>Open House</b> will be held at their home on July 5, 2003 from 2 - 4 p.m. Home Address: 6894 Brush Rd, RR #6 Forest ON N0N 1J0</p>	<p>1943 July 1 &amp; July 4 2003</p> <p><b>BAS and ROELY NEDERLOF</b></p> <p><b>60 years of Marriage</b> "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," Ephesians 4:5</p> <p><b>60 years of Ministry</b> "who holds the seven stars in his right hand," Revelation 2:1b</p> <p>To celebrate, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren would like to honor them with your presence at an <b>Open House</b> on Tuesday, July 1st from 3 - 5 p.m. at the Vancouver Christian Reformed Church, 2670 Victoria Dr., Vancouver, B.C.</p> <p>With love: Nancy, Bob &amp; Katie Elsy &amp; Rich, Erik, Anna, Sara Rochelle &amp; Stefan, Eline &amp; Noah Theo &amp; Debbie, April &amp; Kyle Rick &amp; MJ, Krista &amp; Brianna</p> <p>Home Address: #808-3755 McGill St. Burnaby BC V5C 1M2</p>
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## Classifieds

Anniversaries			Obituaries		
<p>Winschoten the Netherlands 1953 July 7 2003</p> <p>"But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon those who fear Him." Ps. 103:17</p> <p>With thanksgiving and praise to God, we hope to celebrate the <b>50th Wedding Anniversary (DV)</b> of</p> <p><b>FRED AND BERNICE BOVEN (nee Havinga)</b></p> <p>God's rich blessings include their children, Fred &amp; Ruth Boven, <i>Schomberg ON</i> Ray &amp; Shirley Boven, <i>Forestburg AB</i> Theresa &amp; Paul Wilson, <i>Brampton ON</i> Theo &amp; Tena Boven, <i>Hamilton ON</i> 14 grandchildren &amp; 2 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>An <b>Open House</b> will be held at Clarkson CRC, 1880 Lakeshore Rd. W. Mississauga, on July 12, 2003 from 3 - 5 pm. <i>Best wishes only, please.</i></p> <p>Home address: 487 Bohemia Cres. Oakville ON L6J 2K7</p>	<p>Oakville Ontario 1953 July 9 2003</p> <p><b>ARIE AND CO VOSKAMP</b></p> <p>With thankfulness to God we rejoice with our parents on the celebration of their <b>50th Wedding Anniversary.</b> We pray that God in His love may continue to be with them.</p> <p>Best wishes from: John &amp; Audrey Kemper, <i>Penticton BC</i> Dave &amp; Michelle, Adrian, Calvin &amp; Ria, Jennifer &amp; (Andrew) Ralph &amp; Marian Enzlin, <i>Woodstock</i> Marcia, John, Amy Pete &amp; Chris Voskamp, <i>Woodstock</i> Derek &amp; Christine, Michael (with the Lord 2002), Calvin Frank &amp; Kathy, <i>Waterdown</i> Joshua, Nathan Harry &amp; Connie Voskamp, <i>Winter Haven Fla.</i> Robyn, Nicole, Matthew, Stacey</p> <p><b>Open House</b> will be held D.V. on July 9, from 2-4 p.m. at the Bethel Christian Reformed Church, 606 Dundas St. E. Waterdown</p> <p>Home Address: 7 Fern St Box 772 Waterdown ON L0R 1H0</p>	<p>In Jezus Ontslapen Nov. 14, 1909 May 28, 2003 De Lier, The Netherlands Orillia, Ont.</p> <p>Peacefully at the Champlain Manor, Orillia our dear wife, mother, Oma &amp; great-Oma</p> <p><b>GEERTRUIDA (Trudy) EISING-STIGTER</b> went home to be with her Lord and Savior.</p> <p>Beloved wife of 67 years to: Roelof Martinus (Ralph) Eising.</p> <p>Dear mother of: Audrey &amp; Henk Zwiers, <i>Orillia ON</i> Joan Weaver, <i>London ON</i> Elly &amp; Cor Wust, <i>Orillia ON</i> Ralph (t) &amp; Nellie Eising, <i>Tweed ON</i> Trudy &amp; Karel van Ettehoven, <i>The Neth.</i> Jack &amp; Nuala Eising, <i>Ireland</i> Nel &amp; Udo Brenne, <i>London ON</i> Much loved Oma of 15 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Dear sister of Hendrika van den Bogert, <i>Grimsby ON</i></p> <p>Predeceased by two sisters and three brothers.</p> <p>A service of celebration of Trudy's life was held Friday May 30, at the Orillia CRC.</p> <p>Address: Mr. R. M. Eising 65 Fittons Rd. W. Orillia ON L3V 3V2</p>	<p>August 30, 1930 May 14, 2003 Achlum, Friesland Georgetown The Netherlands Ontario</p> <p><b>HENRY DYKSTRA</b></p> <p>Called Home by our heavenly Father "But I trust in you, O Lord, I say, 'You are my God' My times are in your hands." Psalm 31:14</p> <p>Beloved Husband of: Gé DeBoer</p> <p>Loving Father of: Charles, William, Elizabeth, Paul and Cindy.</p> <p>Dear Brother of: Winnifred &amp; John VanderLinden <i>Perth ON</i>, Jeanette &amp; the late Charles Crimes <i>Perth, ON</i> Ulbe &amp; Hannie DeBoer <i>Lelystad, The Netherlands</i>, Arnold &amp; Chila DeBoer <i>Almere, The Netherlands</i> Andries DeBoer, <i>Georgetown ON</i></p> <p>Friends were received at J.S. Jones and Son Funeral Home in Georgetown, and a memorial service was held in the chapel there on May 17, 2003. In memoriam contributions to Christian Horizons, 384 Arthur St. South, Elmira ON N3B 2P4, would be appreciated.</p> <p>Correspondence Address: Gé DeBoer, 42 Delreux Blvd, Georgetown ON L7G 3Y4</p>	<p>Ruinen, Dr Bampton, Ont. Nov. 29, 1908 June 3, 2003</p> <p>The Lord took home peacefully</p> <p><b>JANTJE DROST (nee Bergman)</b> in her 95th year.</p> <p>Predeceased by Dad Koob Drost (1992), son John Drost (1963) daughter Jane Bruinsma (2002) sons-in-law Jan De Weerd (1979) &amp; Bert Donkersgoed (2000), great-granddaughter Jessica Burgsma (1989)</p> <p>Dear Mother of: Stien &amp; Arie Peters Jenny &amp; Clarence Haalstra Henry &amp; Piea Drost Roely Donkersgoed Stephanie &amp; Ron Schelhaas Ted Bruinsma Diane &amp; Cecil Bruinsma Henny &amp; Marinus Van Laren Coby &amp; Bill Slotegraaf</p> <p>38 grandchildren, 74 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren</p> <p>A memorial service was held June 6 at H.C.H., Rev. Van Egmond officiating.</p> <p>"For the Lord is good and His love endures forever. His faithfulness continues through all generations." Psalm 100:5</p> <p>Correspondence Address: H. Drost PO Box 1414, Clinton ON N0M 1L0</p>	
		<p>March 29, 1921 May 29, 2003 Oldelamer Fr. Burlington Ont.</p> <p>The Lord has called home his faithful daughter</p> <p><b>MARGJE CORNELIE WOUDESTRA (nee van der Wal)</b></p> <p>"To be absent from this body is to be present with the Lord."</p> <p>No one who met this child of God, left her presence without knowing that she lived out the 'fruits of the Spirit' in her every action. Her witness to all of us, was extraordinary. While we will miss her here on this earthly plain, we take comfort that she is with our Father. Heaven is the richer for her presence.</p> <p>Margje is survived by Heeres, her husband of fifty-seven years. She was a devoted <b>mother and grandmother</b> to: John &amp; Bonnie Woudstra, <i>Ottawa</i> Katie, Maggie Woudstra, <i>Ottawa</i> Melissa Woudstra, <i>Toronto</i> Keith &amp; Cindy Woudstra, <i>Milton</i> Matthew Woudstra, <i>Georgetown</i> Chris Woudstra, <i>Hamilton</i></p> <p>Margje is survived by six <b>siblings</b>: Nell Woudstra, <i>Burlington</i> Ann Bergshoeff, <i>Burlington</i> Gerben van der Wal, <i>Holland</i> Alie De Jong, <i>Holland</i> Gé van der Wal, <i>Holland</i> Greta Brouwer, <i>Holland</i></p> <p><b>Sister-in-law:</b> Alie van der Wal, <i>Burlington</i></p> <p>We are grateful to everyone at the Carpenter Hospice for their tenderness and compassion for mom and her family members. Their care made such a difference to us during mom's final days. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Carpenter Hospice, 2250 Parkway Ave. Burlington ON L7R 1H7.</p> <p>The service was held at the New Street Christian Reformed Church. The family thanks Pastor Groen and Pastor Brix.</p> <p>Correspondence address: 3260 New St Apt 319, Burlington ON L7N 3L4 or: RR #3, Milton ON L9T 2X7</p> <p>"When I stand in glory, I will see his face. And then I'll serve my King forever, in that holy place"</p>	<p>Engwierum, Friesland Jarvis, Ont. April 16, 1945 May 23, 2003</p> <p>Peacefully, at home, the Lord called to Himself</p> <p><b>JACOB (Jake) HELDER</b> after a courageous battle with cancer at the age of 58.</p> <p>"Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them - the Lord, who remains faithful forever." Psalm 146:4,5</p> <p>Devoted husband of: Margaret Helder (De Boer), <i>Jarvis ON</i></p> <p>Dear Dad of: Lisa &amp; Doug Glasbergen, <i>Caledonia ON</i> Philip, at home Ian, at home Matthew, at home</p> <p>Loving Pa of: Leanna, Colton &amp; Brooke Glasbergen</p> <p>Son of: Maaiké &amp; the late Edze Helder and son-in-law of Arie &amp; Hilda Hoogenboom, all of <i>Townsend ON</i></p> <p>A celebration of Jake's life was held at the Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church of Jarvis, Ont. with Pastor Ken Benjamins leading the service.</p> <p>Address: Marg. Helder, RR #1 Jarvis ON N0A 1J0</p>	<p>For Rent</p> <p>Needed someone to share house in <b>Guelph</b>, Christian young man, NS, ND. Available immediately. Call Brian at 519-822-4506 and leave a message.</p> <p><b>Room to rent</b> in a house with other males in <b>St. Catharines</b>. Close to Brock &amp; Niagara College. Please call 905 708-9833.</p> <p><b>Accommodation Wanted</b></p> <p>York-Seneca 19-year old male student looking for accommodation and or someone to share apartment. Prefer <b>Willowdale area</b>. Please call 519-524-7081</p> <p><b>Vacation Properties</b></p> <p><b>Cochrane Ont. Cozy cedar log cabin</b></p> <p>Rent by the night or weekly. Living room, kitchen, two bedrooms, bathroom with shower, etc. <b>Overlooking lake</b> Phone: <b>Ada Struyk 705-272-6169</b> email: cmstruyk@puc.net</p> <p><b>VACATION ACCOMMODATION</b> Goderich, Ontario - Upper large one bedroom apartment - furnished - sleeps 4 - 5. Ideal for families. Close to beaches, camping, golfing, fishing, shopping and theatre. Call 519-524-4459 or e-mail <b>ckuipers@hurontel.on.ca</b>. Reservations required.</p>	
<p>1953 <b>JOHN AND RITA PRINZEN (nee Veldhuizen)</b> 2003</p> <p>With thankfulness to God we hope to celebrate our parents <b>50th Wedding Anniversary.</b> We praise God for his faithfulness.</p> <p>Bert &amp; Helen Prinzen John, Brian Rev. Bill &amp; Grace Hoogland Dave &amp; Karen Vanderploeg Isaac, Derek Hoogland</p> <p><b>Open House</b> Sunday, June 22 2 - 4 p.m. at 4795 Kalar Rd. Niagara Falls ON L2H 1S7</p> <p><i>Best Wishes Only</i></p>	<p>1953 <b>JOHN AND RITA PRINZEN (nee Veldhuizen)</b> 2003</p> <p>Sleen, The Netherlands Drayton, Ontario</p> <p>"Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain." Ps 127:1</p> <p>With thanksgiving to God for his faithfulness and blessings, we announce the <b>50th Wedding Anniversary</b> of our parents and grandparents</p> <p><b>TONY AND ALICE SPALING (nee Lubbers)</b></p> <p>with love from: Harry &amp; Trudy Spaling - Melisa, Michael, Maria, <i>Edmonton AB</i> Alfred &amp; Francis Spaling - Ryan, Sonja, Julia, Candace, <i>Wingham ON</i> Charlie &amp; Lorrie Spaling - Nicole, Nathan, Nicholas, Natasha, <i>Drayton ON</i> Andy Spaling, <i>Hamilton ON</i> Ray &amp; Audrey Spaling - Jonathan, Alicia, <i>Kitchener ON</i></p> <p>Come celebrate at an <b>Open House</b> on July 5 from 2 - 4 p.m. at 76 Wood St., Drayton ON</p> <p>Your presence is your gift.</p> <p>Mailing address: P.O. Box 105, Drayton ON N0G 1P0</p>	<p>1953 <b>JOHN AND RITA PRINZEN (nee Veldhuizen)</b> 2003</p> <p>Sleen, The Netherlands Drayton, Ontario</p> <p>"Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain." Ps 127:1</p> <p>With thanksgiving to God for his faithfulness and blessings, we announce the <b>50th Wedding Anniversary</b> of our parents and grandparents</p> <p><b>TONY AND ALICE SPALING (nee Lubbers)</b></p> <p>with love from: Harry &amp; Trudy Spaling - Melisa, Michael, Maria, <i>Edmonton AB</i> Alfred &amp; Francis Spaling - Ryan, Sonja, Julia, Candace, <i>Wingham ON</i> Charlie &amp; Lorrie Spaling - Nicole, Nathan, Nicholas, Natasha, <i>Drayton ON</i> Andy Spaling, <i>Hamilton ON</i> Ray &amp; Audrey Spaling - Jonathan, Alicia, <i>Kitchener ON</i></p> <p>Come celebrate at an <b>Open House</b> on July 5 from 2 - 4 p.m. at 76 Wood St., Drayton ON</p> <p>Your presence is your gift.</p> <p>Mailing address: P.O. Box 105, Drayton ON N0G 1P0</p>	<p><b>FRYSKE TSJERKETSJINST</b></p> <p>Will be held in the Ancaster Chr Ref Church 70 Garner Rd East June 29 at 2:30 p.m.</p> <p>Foargonger Ds J. D. Hellinga</p>		



## Classifieds

## Job Opportunities

## Miscellaneous

The Ministry to Seafarers sponsored by the Christian Reformed Churches of British Columbia invites applications for a full time

### Ministry to Seafarers Chaplain

to serve in the Port of Vancouver, BC, Canada

The Christian Reformed Churches in British Columbia have long sponsored a ministry to seafarers who visit the Port of Vancouver. This ministry has been in existence for over 30 years and plays a key role in an ecumenical outreach to over 15,000 seafarers annually from over 75 different countries who come through our ports. Due to the retirement of Rev. Simon Wolfert, the Ministry to Seafarers Committee is seeking to find another chaplain who can give leadership to this vibrant ministry.

We are looking for a Christian with a strong commitment to the Reformed faith;

- Is self motivated and able to work within a team setting,
- Has theological training, though ordination as a Minister of the Word is not a prerequisite.
- Has experience in cross cultural missions
- Has experience working pastorally with a wide variety of people.
- Innovative in finding new approaches to connect this ministry with the supporting constituency
- Is able to relate well to religious and ethnically diverse groups of seafarers who visit the Ministry Center
- Is physically able to visit on board ships
- Is able to nurture healthy working relationships with other volunteers and is committed to fostering ecumenical partnerships with other denominations who share in this ministry at the Flying Angel Club (Ministry Center)

A job description is available upon request. Please send a letter of application, a complete resume, two reference letters as well as a brief outline of a personal vision for this Ministry to Seafarers to:

**Mrs. Githa De Groot**  
#152 - 32691 Garibaldi Drive  
Abbotsford, BC V2T 5T7  
Email: johngitha@shaw.ca

Deadline for applications to be considered is September 1, 2003

### STOUFFVILLE CHRISTIAN ELEMENTARY School

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Please call school at  
905-640-3297 or e-mail  
stouffville\_cs@bellnet.ca

### YOUTH DIRECTOR/PASTOR

The three Christian Reformed Churches of Sarnia, Ontario are seeking a full time Youth Director/Pastor to continue a unique and exciting combined youth ministry. Solid programming & committed volunteer leadership is already in place. Candidate must have strong relational and administrative skills plus the desire and ability to lead and equip our youth, helping them to grow in faith and service to our Lord.

Please send resume and inquiries to:

**Art Capelle,**  
2261 Confederation, Sarnia, Ontario, N7T-7H3,  
519-337-4660 or email: artc@rivernet.net

### ATTENTION ARTISTS

**HOLLAND CHRISTIAN HOMES** in Brampton, Ontario is in the process of adding a second nursing home and another 96 seniors apartments. Upon occupancy of this last phase, Holland Christian Homes will be the home of over 1000 seniors living in a caring community.

To promote the inclusion of some large pieces of art in the building that would have meaning for the residents and staff, we invite artists, possibly in the medium of painting, sculpture, ceramics, metal, wood or stained glass to submit proposals for artwork that would be appropriate.

For further information contact the architect  
for Holland Christian Homes, Roland  
Jonker by email at his office -  
rjonker@oca-architects.com



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Send your enquiries and/or  
resume to

**Elsie Bakker,**  
ebakker@newlifecrc.ca  
or phone  
604-852-1585, x21.

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Contact:

**R. VanderPloeg**  
Secr./Treas.

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## Events/Advertising

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion

- June 21, 22** Rehoboth Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, **Etobicoke, Ont.**, 50th Anniversary. All invited to an open house on Sat. 2-5 p.m. and special service Sunday at 10 a.m. See ad this issue.
- June 28, 29** All Nations CRC, **Halifax**, hosts 50th Anniversary celebration. In conjunction with Pier 21 75th celebrations. Pancake Brunch, Sat. & Sunday worship celebration. Call 902-429-7136 or visit [www.allnationscrc.org](http://www.allnationscrc.org). See ad in May 26 issue.
- June 29** **Heritage Sunday** (Hollandse Dienst) 3 p.m. at the Zion CRC, 409 Adelaide Ave.E. **Oshawa, Ont.** Rev. John Veenstra, preaching, Rev. Dirk Habermehl, organist.
- July 1** **Friskan Picnic** starting at 11 a.m. at Pinehurst Conservation Park, **Paris, Ontario**. (Hwy 24A -4 miles north of Paris).
- July 7** **London, ON** The Royal Canadian College of Organists (London Centre) presents **Jonathan Oldengarm** in concert. Trinity Lutheran Church, 146 Colborne St., 8:00 PM. Information: 519-432-4832.
- July 12** **Wieringermeerdag** 10 a.m. in **Stratford** on Queens Park Drive. Potluck lunch. Phone 519-631-6234 for more information.
- Oct 10-14** The **Transcona** CRC (Winnipeg, Manitoba) will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary with praise, thanksgiving & fellowship. For info call: Bev Steendam at 204-853-2150 or [jsteenda@mts.net](mailto:jsteenda@mts.net)
- Oct 11,12** First CRC, **Guelph, Ont.** 50th anniversary. Celebrations include childrens programs, Social, Banquet. See September issue for more details.
- Dec 5, 6,7** **Bethel CRC of Lacombe, Alberta**, 50th anniversary - weekend of praise, thanksgiving and fellowship All former and present members and friends are invited. For info, call: Eleanor Wildeboer at 403-782-2602 or e-mail [wilwildeboer@aol.com](mailto:wilwildeboer@aol.com) (See ad Mar 17 issue)

## Events

THE ROYAL CANADIAN COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS  
(London Centre) presents  
**Jonathan Oldengarm** in concert.  
Trinity Lutheran Church,  
146 Colborne St., **London, ON**  
July 7, 2003 at 8:00 PM.  
Information: 519-432-4832.

## WIERINGERMEERDAG

July 12 10 a.m. Potluck Lunch  
Stratford  
Queens Park Drive  
Phone 519-631-6234

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## HERITAGE SUNDAY

(Hollandse Dienst)  
Sunday  
June 29 at 3 p.m.  
at the Oshawa CRC  
409 Adelaide Ave. E.  
Oshawa, Ont.

Preacher: Rev. John Veenstra  
Organist:  
Rev. Dirk Habermehl



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- Psalm 90:1





## News

# A wonderful conference after all!

Hank Kuntz

That would certainly sum up the feelings of the committee that undertook to organize the "At The King's Table II" conference at Sir Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario. This committee, under the leadership of Ralph Bus, Regional Consultant for Disability Concerns, enthusiastically started to put plans together a year and a half ago for a weekend conference, Friday night to Sunday noon, similar to one held in 1996. That one, also entitled "At The King's Table," drew hundreds of conferees for the entire weekend and hundreds more for the Saturday session alone. A repeat of a conference in a similar format was eagerly awaited. With keynote speaker lined up, volunteers, workshops and weekend facilities in place, the last step would be administering the registrations.

Right at the time this were to take place, the SARS infection became headline news and things stalled. Calls were received that people had changed their mind about attending. One Christian institution canceled its group registration. Even though the health situation began to stabilize, the question was still whether to cancel the event or not.

To cut a long story short, Disability Concerns Eastern Canada (DCEC), along with Director James Vanderlaan encouraged the committee to consider changing the format of the conference.

And that is what the committee decided: in its place, they planned a one-day event, including times of praise, worship, meditation, workshops, a round table forum, a prepared meal, a dozen exhibitors and lots of refreshments and time to fellowship. It is not for nothing that this conference had as its theme "Through The Roof" (Mark 2: 1-12). Part of Disability Concerns is a ministry of healing, and that would be done whether the conferees numbered 25, 100, 200 or 500.

Conference chairman Ralph Bus put it eloquently when he opened the proceedings on May 24, 2003 in the atrium of Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.

He referred to something that is very common in the life of a person dealing with a disability: time and again you run into obstacles, so time and again you deal with the obstacle and you make sure you attain your goal. That is why we went ahead.

The Biblical reference to the story of the man carried by his four friends to be lowered through the roof into the presence of Jesus has this same poignant aspect: obstacles are there to be overcome by fellow members in the Body. Their work is essential to get to the place of healing.

It would become tedious if we were to list all the workshop titles here, a choice of six in the morning and nine in the afternoon. Suffice it to say that the emphasis, in line with the biblical theme, was mostly on how to assist those who are engaged in the carrying and removing of roof tiles to get the necessary help for a friend or relative. This was true also for the noon hour round table forum, attended also by nearly all the conferees. Its title "Where is God if I'm disabled?" was intended to draw out the fact that we are God's hands; we are his presence — an awesome thought indeed.



CRC Disability Concerns leads workshop at regional diaconal conferences.

A total of sixty-five registrants, plus all the workshop leaders, a dozen volunteers as well as the roughly ten exhibitors made for a lively, interactive crowd. There was an excellent upbeat spirit throughout the day, needs were discussed, hearts were opened, praise and prayers as-

cended. It was wonderful; a way was found to minister to one another. The hard work of all involved in the planning and execution of the conference was amply rewarded by the appreciative and thankful responses.

It would have been so easy to give up when problems were encountered, when the idea of continuing at all was in question.

Snatching victory from the jaws of defeat is probably not such a good way of putting it. Better to say: "But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

We put our needs before the Lord, he answered our call, and to him be the glory.

Hank Kuntz, Regional Consultant, Disability Concerns

[More on Alzheimer's, pp. 12, 13.]

## Glasgow archbishop attacks "cultural vandalism" of Euro constitution

GLASGOW, Scotland — The draft preamble to the new European Constitution represents "an act of cultural vandalism" for excluding any reference to Christianity, says Archbishop Mario Conti of Glasgow.

In an article in the Glasgow Herald, the archbishop, who supports greater European cooperation, criticized the preamble text which instead pays tribute to "the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe nourished first by the civilizations of Greece and Rome" and "later by philosophical currents of the Enlightenment."

Archbishop Conti contends that to omit any reference to Europe's Christian identity creates a "yawning historical and philosophical vacuum between the end of the Greco-Roman influence and the beginning of the Enlightenment."

"What is missing, in short, is an acknowledgment of Europe's spiritual, and particularly Christian roots and culture," he writes.

The archbishop states that the current draft represents an "extraordinary attempt to write the name of Christ and the Christian Church out of the consciousness of the new Europe. As such it is a profoundly dishonest reworking of history."

Orthodox, Anglican and Roman Catholic leaders meeting in Athens have urged the European Union to begin a "regular dialogue" with churches, and said that a projected EU constitution should contain a clear reference to Europe's "Christian roots."

The three-day meeting May 4 to 6, organized by the (Orthodox) Church of Greece, came as a European Convention chaired by

French ex-president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing was finalizing a Constitutional Treaty for the EU.

The issue of whether the document should include a reference to God or to Europe's Christian heritage has been highly controversial.

A statement issued after the Athens meeting said it would be "inconceivable for the European Convention not to make a clear and specific reference to Europe's Christian roots in the Constitution that is to shape the European Union's future in the years to come."

Orthodox Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens told the conference that Christianity should be mentioned in the EU Constitution "not only as the creative power of our civilization, but also as that power which reassures us precisely that the Union will be European,"

according to a text of his speech issued by the Church of Greece.

"The formulation should be such as not to infringe upon religious tolerance, not to be binding upon the state, not to come into conflict with the rights of man, not to constitute a threat or hindrance to advancement of the non-Christians who are citizens of Europe," stressed Christodoulos.

In remarks, however, interpreted as rejecting Turkey's possible EU membership, Christodoulos warned that the integration of "totally foreign cultures" out of "temporary geopolitical considerations" would turn the EU into "a defective copy of the former Soviet Union."

[Stories from Zenit and ENI.]

## News Digest

### Polish monks brewing secret ale

By Jonathan Luxmoore

Warsaw (ENI) — Cistercian monks in southern Poland hope to become the country's first distributors of real ale, brewed according to a recipe said to date from the 17th century.

"This beer is dark and distinctive — it has a great bitter taste," said Eugeniusz Włodarczyk, abbot of the monastery at Szczyrzyc in the Beskidy Mountains. "We won't be producing a huge amount so as not to compete with the big breweries. But it'll be quite different from other beers now on the market."

The first of up to 5 million litres per year would hit bars this month in the southern Polish city of Krakow, said Włodarczyk. Yearly beer production stands at around 3 billion litres, or 50 litres per person in Poland.

In a recent interview, the abbot said he hoped the beer, which has a 4.5 per cent alcoholic content, would become available nationwide within two years. The Cistercians are also hoping to break into the US market through an affiliated Polish-run monastery in Chicago.

The Cistercians had already received sample barrels, ordered specially from beer-making Trappist monks in Belgium, he added.

The abbot said he had come across the 400-year-old recipe during a search through monastery archives in the mid-1990s.

"Of course, the recipe has had to be updated to current production standards," he noted. "We can't divulge it, since our competitors on the brewery network never sleep. All I can say is that the secret lies in a certain very special kind of yeast."

The Cistercians are planning to open a hotel and beer-hall on their 1800-hectare estate, said the manager of the Szczyrzyc monastery, Elzbieta Adamek, and the monks also hope to obtain grants from the European Union to launch their own cheese and honey manufacturing operations.

Church-run businesses have mushroomed over the past decade in Poland, 95 per cent of whose 38 million inhabitants are Roman Catholics. Ventures run by parishes include transport and construction companies.